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# FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

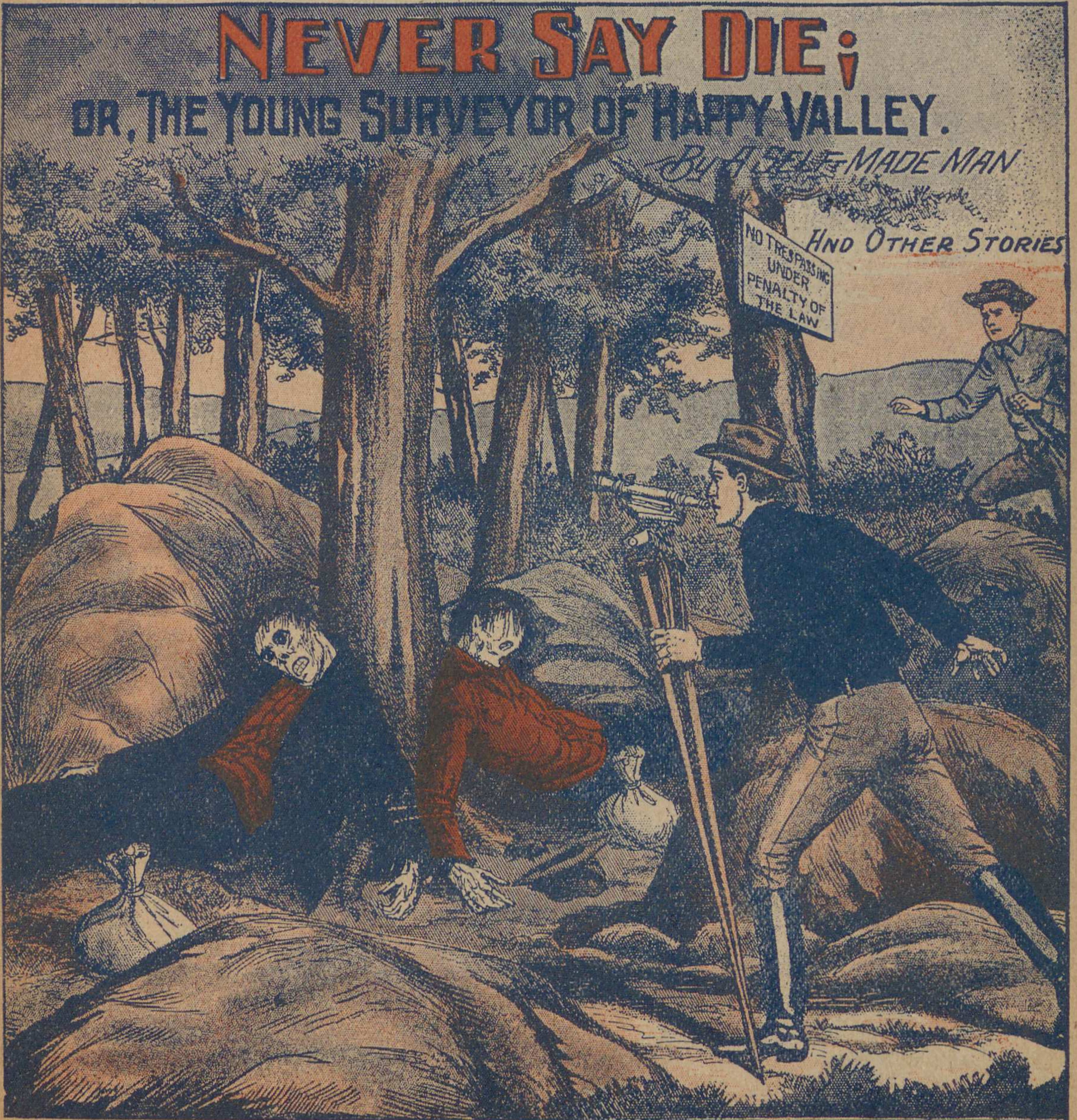
STORIES OF  
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

## NEVER SAY DIE;

### OR, THE YOUNG SURVEYOR OF HAPPY VALLEY.

By A SELF-MADE MAN

AND OTHER STORIES



The sun was just setting behind the distant hills when Fred and Bert came unexpectedly upon a startling sight. Two weather-bleached corpses, with their arms bound together, lay as they had fallen on either side of a tree.



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# FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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No. 964

NEW YORK, MARCH 21, 1924

Price 3 Cents.

## NEVER SAY DIE

### OR, THE YOUNG SURVEYOR OF HAPPY VALLEY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

#### CHAPTER I.—Makes the Reader Acquainted With Fred Stuart, Dora Darling and Luke Jenkins.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Stuart," said pretty Dora Darling, flashing a bewitching glance at a well-built, good-looking boy of seventeen, who at that moment came out of the Brentwood post-office. "How is your mother to-day?"

"Much better, I thank you," replied the boy, raising his hat with a pleased smile. "It was very kind of you to call on her yesterday. She appreciates it very much."

"Don't mention it. If I can be of any service to her I hope you will let me know."

"You are very good to say so," answered the boy, with a grateful look. "But I hope mother will be on her feet again in a day or two."

"I hope she will for your sake," replied the girl. "You are acquainted with Luke Jenkins, are you not?" indicating her escort, a stylishly dressed youth of sixteen, who gave every evidence of having a very high opinion of himself.

"We have met," replied Fred Stuart, evasively.

Luke Jenkins himself entirely ignored the remark, tapping the toes of his patent leather shoes with the end of his natty rattan cane, as if impatient at the delay.

Dora Darling gave a quick glance at both boys, and then, seeming to realize the situation, smiled and extended her hand to Fred, remarking:

"We are going out for a sail on the river. Mr. Jenkins has a new boat, and he has honored me," laughingly, "with an invitation to take the first trip in her."

"I hope you will have a pleasant time," he answered, with a wistful look at the charming girl.

"Thank you, Mr. Stuart. I think I shall enjoy the sail very much, as I just dote on the water."

"I think we had better be going, Miss Darling," interrupted Luke Jenkins, with a gesture of impatience, at the same time casting a contemptuous look at the other boy, whose plain but neat garments showed that he was several degrees lower in the social scale than Master Jenkins himself.

"Don't let me detain you, Miss Dora," said Fred, with a polite bow.

She smiled again, acknowledging his salute, and then the boy passed on his way.

"I can't understand what you see in that fellow to waste your time on him," said Luke, in a discontented tone, as they resumed their walk toward the Jenkins' home by the river.

"Why, what's the matter with Fred Stuart?" asked Dora, opening her pretty eyes in surprise.

"What's the matter with him?" asked Luke, with a snort of disgust. "He isn't a fit person for you to be on familiar terms with."

"Indeed!" replied the girl, with an indignant flush. "I think Fred Stuart the nicest and most gentlemanly boy in town."

She spoke with so much spirit and decision that Luke was quite taken aback.

"I can't say that I admire your taste," he replied, with a sneer. "Fred Stuart is a poor boy, and has to work for his living. You should consider your social standing, Miss Darling. Your parents would not like to know that you receive such a fellow on terms of equality."

"I wish you to understand, Mr. Jenkins, that I associate with nobody whom my parents do not approve of," answered Dora, spiritedly.

"Then I don't see why——"

"My father and mother sanction my acquaintance with Mr. Stuart."

"They do?" exclaimed Luke, with a gasp of discomfiture.

"Why should they not? He is a nice boy. If you knew him better you would agree with me."

"I have no desire to know him better," replied Luke, scornfully. "I don't care to have anything to do with persons in his class. I consider myself a gentleman," loftily.

"I don't admit the difference," replied Dora, stoutly. "A boy may be poor, but he can still be a young gentleman. Fred Stuart is my ideal of what a gentleman ought to be. I have known him for some time, and his conduct has always been such as to entitle him to my respect and esteem. He is as good as gold to his mother, and any boy who treats his mother as he does is worthy of any one's friendship."

Luke Jenkins was evidently not much pleased with Dora's defense of Fred Stuart.

"Oh, he's all right, I dare say, in his way," he returned, with ill-grace; "but the barriers that divide our set from the common herd must be maintained. My father would not allow me to

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have anything to do with a poor boy, and my friends would be very much astonished if they saw me on familiar terms with such a person as Fred Stuart."

"You have a perfect right to select your associates, Mr. Jenkins. I believe I have the same privilege."

"Of course; but——"

"We will change the conversation, please," Dora said, with dignity.

"Certainly. What shall we talk about? My new boat? She's a beauty. I am sure you will admire her when you see her. My father gave her to me for a birthday present. I was sixteen last Wednesday."

They now came in sight of the water, where the shady street ran gently down to the bank of Snake River. This stream, whose serpentine course had given it its name, was swift and deep. It took its rise in the mountains which hedged in Happy Valley on the north, ran its sinuous course as smooth as a millpond, except when ruffled by a lively breeze, for a matter of ten miles, when perhaps two score of bristling black rocks, shooting their heads just above the surface, turned it into a dangerous stretch of rapids a mile below Brentwood.

Several of the well-to-do residents of the town, which was the county seat, had built their homes on the shelving banks of the river, and this was the case with Abner Jenkins, Luke's father. Mr. Jenkins was a prosperous lawyer. He had got his start in life by marrying an heiress, and this good fortune put him on Easy street. He was a fair lawyer, and gradually established himself in Brentwood as the foremost legal luminary in the township.

He was now attorney for the Happy Valley Rapid Transit Company, and his wife was the acknowledged leader of Brentwood's exclusive set. Mr. Jenkins was a large, pompous-looking gentleman, who never went abroad without a heavy gold-headed cane in fair weather and a gold-handled silk umbrella when the sky looked threatening.

He held his head well up, as though he owned the town, and everybody else took from him their right to exist. With such a shining example before him, it is small wonder that his son Luke, who was very much like him in many ways, and his mother in others, thought himself the king pin among the rising generation of Brentwood. He was inclined to patronize his social equals, look down on those a peg or two below him, and despite the general run of the people, whom he called the "common herd."

Dora Darling was the daughter of the cashier of the Brentwood National Bank. Her people were as nice and as much respected as any one in town, but still they did not move in the "first circles," socially considered. Dora was considered the prettiest girl in Brentwood, and therefore Luke Jenkins was attracted to her. Privately he believed that he was honoring her with his notice, but he took care not to let her think so, for he found her as spunky and independent as she was charming, and he preferred her society to that of any other girl in the place. As soon as he found she was fascinated with boat sail-

ing, he induced his father to dispose of the ordinary sailboat they had and have a new one built on lines of greater beauty, comfort and safety. It arrived on his birthday, two days before, and he had invited Dora to make the initial trip with him.

She was delighted with the idea and expected that the gardener of the Jenkins establishment, who was an old and experienced boatman, would manage the boat as he always did the old one, in which she had made a couple of trips. Luke, however, had no intention of having a third party on board.

"There's a smacking breeze blowing," said Luke, as he opened the iron gate which admitted them to the spacious and well-kept grounds. "We shall have a bang-up sail."

He led the way down to the small wharf alongside of which the "Dora" was moored.

"Isn't she a dream!" exclaimed the girl, rapturously.

"I had her named after you," said Luke, with a smirk, expecting that she would feel sensible of the honor he had conferred on her. "Look at the stern and you will see the word 'Dora' there in raised gilt letters."

She flushed a bit at this, but whether she was pleased or not he couldn't tell from her face.

"Step on board and I will show you into the cabin."

She permitted him to hand her down into the cockpit. Then he unlocked the sliding panel and stepped down two brass-bound steps into a snug little cabin, finished in white and gilt.

"You have a splendid boat, Mr. Jenkins," she said, after she had seen everything and stepped out into the cockpit again.

"I'm glad you like her, Miss Darling. We will now test her sailing qualities, which the builder assured my father are tip-top," said Luke, beginning to remove the stops from the mainsail.

"But you haven't your man here," she said, in some surprise.

"Oh, we don't need him. I can sail her all right myself," he said, proceeding with the work in hand.

"I didn't know that you could sail a boat," she answered in wonder.

"Sure, I can. I took lessons from William in the old boat while this one was building."

"Are you sure that you know how to handle a boat?" she asked, with some misgivings.

"Of course I do," he replied, confidently. "My governor wouldn't have bought her if he didn't know that I was learning the ropes."

She was satisfied and made no further opposition to his getting the sailboat under way.

He hoisted the mainsail, ran up the jib, and then released the line which held her to the wharf. The boat at once shot out into the river.

"Shall we go up or down?" he asked, as he took his seat beside the tiller.

"Either way suits me," she answered.

"Then we'll go down," he said. "Stoop as the boom swings over and seat yourself on this side."

She did as directed, and a moment later the "Dora" was darting down the river like a skimming seagull.



## CHAPTER II.—In Dire Peril.

When Fred Stuart left Dora Darling and her escort in front of the post-office, he kept on down Main street till he came to a small frame building, over the door of which hung the sign "John Fisher, Architect and Surveyor." He entered and hung his hat on a convenient peg, thus showing that he was in some capacity connected with the office.

Another boy of about his own age, freckled-faced and sturdy, known as Bert Barlow, was seated at a table with a blue print before him from which he was laboriously making certain calculations on a sheet of white paper. The only desk in the place, an oak rolled-top one, standing near a window overlooking a side street, was closed.

"Well, how are you getting on?" asked Fred, in a cheery tone, glancing at the other boy as he took his seat at another table, littered with plans.

"So-so," replied the freckled-faced boy, with a comical grimace, which seemed to imply that he wasn't making any progress to speak of.

"Can't you make those estimates?"

"Oh, I'll get there one of these days."

"Want me to show you anything?"

"Well, you might figure those specifications out. It'll give me a lift."

"All right. I'll do that for you, Bert," said Fred, cheerily.

There was silence in the office for a few minutes.

"Has Mr. Fisher been in?" asked Fred, as he handed over the results of his calculations.

"No. He went down to Jessup's."

"I know that. Anybody else been here?"

"Not a soul."

"Here's the boss now," said Fred, a few minutes later, as he glanced out of the front window.

Mr. Fisher opened the street door and entered.

"Been to the post-office yet, Fred?" he asked his chief assistant.

"Yes, sir. There was nothing in your box."

The architect opened his desk and seated himself.

"Look here, Fred. I want you to take this blue print to the foreman at the creek right away."

"Yes, sir."

"Tell him that the bridge extensions must be made to conform to these alterations, and that he must hurry things along, as the contract calls for the completion of the structure next Wednesday."

"All right, sir."

The boy took the drawing, placed it carefully in his pocket, put on his hat and started for Snake Creek, where Mr. Fisher was erecting a small bridge for the county. The creek was an off-shoot of Snake River just above the rapids. It was nearly two miles from the office, but he could take a trolley car on the Happy Valley Traction line, which would land him within three-quarters of a mile of his destination. This Fred did and reached the bridge about half-past four. He handed the blue print to the foreman of the job, together with the verbal instructions, and after watching the workmen for a while, he decided to go down to the river, a short distance

away, and take that road home, for the office closed at five and he was not expected to return there from the bridge. The declining sun marked a golden pathway upon the surface of the river, and in the midst of it he saw a jaunty sailboat flying before the stiff breeze.

"That's Luke Jenkins' new boat, as sure as anything. Yes, I can see him steering her, with Dora Darling on the other side of the tiller. That boat is a beauty, and no mistake. What a lucky boy Luke is! With all his advantages one would think he'd be half-way decent to those who are not so well-placed in the world. Instead of which he treats most of us Brentwood fellows as if we were the scum of the earth. I don't see what he gains by it. I guess he's made himself the most unpopular boy in the township. If he can stand it I s'pose it's nobody's business but his own."

Thus mused Fred Stuart as he paused on the river bank and watched the graceful flight of the sailboat down the river. Perhaps as he stood there and looked wistfully across the water at the dainty form of Dora Darling, he wished it were his luck to own such a handsome boat, and be able to sail the sun-kissed stream with the beautiful girl who, to tell the honest truth, occupied a very large share of his thoughts at times.

The river narrowed at the point where Fred stood, and the boy thought it was high time that Luke shifted his helm and came about on the opposite tack, for the light craft was drawing perilously near to the rapids.

"Ah, there goes his sheet at last," breathed Fred. "He seems to have held on till the last moment. He must have great confidence in his—good gracious!"

The exclamation was drawn from Fred by a sudden change in the aspect of affairs. A sharp flaw from the other side of the river struck and careened the boat over as she came about. The sheet attached to the end of the swinging boom escaped from Luke's hand and the boom itself swung away out at right angles with the boat and began to thrash about in the water. To a cool and competent boatman this of itself would have been no great misfortune, especially as the boat was unsinkable; but Luke was a mere novice at the business, and he immediately lost his head. This, however, was not the worst of the present case.

Something far more serious had occurred. The sheet when it got away from Luke caught Dora around the arm as she started to spring to the windward side of the cockpit, and becoming entangled, the boom, as it swung outward, drew her in the twinkling of an eye out of the boat, and left her struggling in the swift embrace of the river.

Luke gazed after her with startled and distended eyes, but he seemed utterly unable to move a hand to save her from the almost certain death which faced her. For a few moments the sheet held her like a great fish at the end of an angler's line, then it slipped from her arm, and she was borne away on the stream toward the rapids, a short distance below.

The moment Fred saw her drawn overboard by the action of the boom he understood her great peril, and prepared to go to her rescue at any hazard. He threw off his coat, hat and shoes and



sprang into the water. Fortunately he was a fine swimmer and a strong one. He made headway in spite of the current, which was carrying him below her.

He was half-way out to the boat, though twice that distance below, when the sheet released her, and she was carried away by the current. Fred was not aware of this fact until, as he turned to swim up against the tide, he saw the girl sweeping by him as she came to the surface in a half-conscious condition.

"My heavens!" he groaned; "she'll be in the rapids in two minutes unless I can reach her. Even then the chances are good that we'll both be caught in that trap together."

He started down after her hand over hand, and reached her just as she was going under for the second time on the fringe of the white water which marked the outer margin of the rapids. She lay limp and lifeless on his arm.

"Now to save her," he muttered between his teeth, as he struck out for the shore.

The task, however, was beyond him, for the water was swifter here than elsewhere, and his strength had already been sorely taxed. He did the best he could, and fought against the strong current with every ounce of power that was in his sinewy arms; but the fight was too unequal, and, despite his exertions, he drifted into the boiling waters of the rapids.

Could he and Dora survive the trip through that seething cauldron alive with sharp-pointed rocks? It hardly seemed possible. A dozen unfortunate persons had at different times been drawn into that whirling waste of spume and rock, but not one had ever been known to come out alive in the calmer stretch below. Fred didn't give up hope, even at that crucial moment. The pluck inherent in him came to his aid and made him put up a game fight for his life, as well as for the life of his precious burden. But it was impossible for him to entirely get beyond the danger zone.

He realized that fact at last as he saw they were being carried against one of the biggest rocks in the turbulent channel. So he did the only thing he could do, and that was grasp a jutting rock firmly as he was slipping by it and pull himself around against it.

Then, with the last of his waning strength, aided by his feet underneath, he succeeded in drawing himself and Dora half-way out of the water, and effecting a lodgment on the apex of the rock.

### CHAPTER III.—Saved from the Rapids.

In the meantime, Luke and his sailboat were in a ticklish position. Completely dazed by the calamity which had happened, he stood in the cockpit and made no effort to recover the boom. As a consequence the little craft drifted right down toward the rapids.

Fortunately for him, a boat rowed by two men came out of a small inlet on the opposite shore, and her occupants immediately noticed the precarious position of Luke and the "Dora." They put off to the sailboat at once, reaching her just in the nick of time.

"How did you get into this scrape, young man?" asked one of the men, after they had got the boom aboard again.

Luke made no answer. He was shivering with fright over the disappearance of Dora Darling, whom he believed to be drowned.

"Boys who don't understand how to manage a boat oughtn't to be allowed to go out alone in 'em," muttered the other man. "This is a dangerous as well as expensive toy for any inexperienced lad to monkey with, but," noting Luke's swell clothes, "rich men's sons seem to do about as they please."

"Don't go away from here," begged Luke, finding his tongue at last as the boat started up the river. "Look around and see if you can see her."

"See who?" asked the man who had taken charge of the tiller.

"Dora Darling."

"What about her?"

"She's overboard."

"Overboard!" exclaimed the helmsman, looking at his companion, who returned his stare, and then they both regarded the boy searchingly. "You don't mean to say that you had a girl with you in this boat, and that she fell into the water?"

"Yes, yes," replied Luke in a tone of distress. "The boom carried her overboard."

"My heavens!" cried the helmsman in great excitement. "She must have been carried down into the rapids."

"There seems little doubt of that," replied his companion, peering over the water. "I'm afraid there's no hope for her now."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! I never can go home now," groaned Luke, wringing his hands in despair. "They'll say it was my fault."

The helmsman had altered the sailboat's course so as to carry her down toward the edge of the rapids. Neither of the men had much hope of seeing any sign of the girl. They knew only too well the dangers of that boiling stretch of water.

But with a human life at stake, they felt some effort must be made whether it promised anything or not. In the meantime Fred Stuart was supporting himself and the unconscious Dora on the rock which he had been so fortunate as to reach without coming into actual collision with it. Her head lay back on his shoulder, her eyes were closed, and she was very cold and pale.

"I must try and swim to the bank," breathed Fred, as he felt his strength coming back. "It is getting on to sundown, and we must get out of this somehow before dark."

At that moment Dora, with a little, fluttering sigh, opened her eyes. Naturally she was dazed by the situation she found herself in. She did not know where she was, nor understand the peril with which she was surrounded. A face she seemed to know was close to hers and a pair of handsome, dark eyes were gazing down into her own. What did it all mean?

"Where am I?" she fluttered. "What has happened to me?"

"You fell overboard from Luke Jenkins' sailboat," replied Fred, answering her last question first. "I was standing on the bank of the river at the time, saw you fall into the water, and I



did my best to save you from getting into the rapids. I did not succeed, so we are both in a pretty bad pickle, but I hope to get you out of it in a few moments. I am going to save you or go down the rapids with you."

She listened to him with dilated eyes, and seemed to understand the drift of his words.

"Fred Stuart!" she murmured. "Is it really you?"

"Yes, Dora, it is really I."

"I remember now that I was drawn overboard from the sailboat. I thought I was surely going to be drowned, for the water closed over my head, and I felt myself sinking down into the dark river," with a shudder. "And you have saved me, Fred Stuart!"

"I haven't saved you yet, but I hope to do it," he returned, encouragingly.

"Why, where are we? We are still in the water, aren't we?"

"We are on a rock in the midst of the rapids. We are in no immediate danger, but of course we can't remain here very long."

"Where is the sailboat?"

"I'm sure I don't know. I haven't thought about her. I'll look about."

He cast his eyes above the rapids and saw the boat sailing across the river. Then he noticed that there were two men aboard of her beside Luke.

They were searching with their eyes the troubled waters of the rapids for some sign of Dora Darling. Fred shouted to them, but the wind was against his voice and they did not hear him; neither did they seem to see him or his burden, for they were looking another way. He could not wave either arm, as they were fully employed in holding on to the rock and in supporting Dora.

"It is strange how they missed seeing us," thought Fred.

He didn't reflect that the flying spray hid them every minute or two. At length the boat pulled off and headed up the river. They were abandoned to their fate.

"What chance have we of reaching shore?" she said with a calmness that surprised him.

"A fighting chance, I hope," he replied.

"If you were alone you could surely save yourself, couldn't you?" she asked.

"I am not certain even of that."

"But in trying to save me, too, you are jeopardizing yourself."

"Well, what if it? I came out to rescue you, and I'm going to do it if it can be done."

"But if you fail you may lose your own life, too."

"I can't help that. You don't suppose I would desert you, do you? I would be a contemptible coward for fair."

"Fred Stuart, you are the noblest boy in the world," she said, fervently. "I always liked you; but never so much as at this moment."

"And I have always liked you, Dora. You are not offended because I address you by your first name under the circumstances?"

"No," she answered, gently. "Why should I be? To me you seem almost like a brother."

"I wish I was your——"

He was going to say "brother," but suddenly checked himself. Was it because he thought if he

succeeded in saving her she might some day become even dearer to him than a sister?

"Well," he continued abruptly, "are you ready to trust to my exertions to reach the shore? I am going to make the attempt now."

"I am ready," she replied, bravely.

"Then put your arms around my neck and hold on for your life."

As soon as he saw she had the proper hold he pushed off into the water and struck out for the shore. For the next ten minutes he had a desperate fight for their lives. The rushing tide swung them down among the foam-crested rocks, but he kept his eyes on the shore and battled manfully against the stream.

Foot by foot he made his way nearer and nearer to the bank, and after he had accomplished half the distance the scales began to turn in his favor. The worst part of the rapids had been passed, and the trend of the river helped them shoreward.

Putting the remainder of his strength into a final effort, he swam as he never swam before in his life, and in three minutes he touched bottom, and in another he was dragging Dora up on the shelving bank. The fight had been won, and with this knowledge to comfort him he dropped exhausted on the solid ground close to the river's edge.

#### CHAPTER IV.—Fred Goes Home and Subsequently Visits Mrs. Darling.

In a few moments he was conscious that Dora was kneeling beside him, had raised his head on her lap and was chafing his temples as if she thought he had fainted. He struggled to a sitting posture, deeply grateful to Heaven that they had escaped alive from the river.

"How do you feel, Dora?" he asked, a bit anxiously.

"I feel dreadfully wet and uncomfortable," she replied with a faint smile. "I also feel very, very grateful to you, Fred Stuart, for saving my life. I shall never forget what you have done for me as long as I live. I know I can never hope to repay you."

"Yes, you can," he said, unconsciously slipping one arm around her waist. "Do you want to?"

"Why, how can I?" she asked in surprise.

"By giving me just one kiss," he replied, boldly.

A crimson glow suffused her pale cheeks and she looked down much embarrassed.

"You say I saved your life. Am I asking too great a reward? If I am, pardon me. I would not offend you for all the gold in the world," he said, earnestly.

He looked at her a moment, and as she remained silent he was about to rise when he looked up and she said gently:

"You may kiss me."

He put his arm around her again, drew her unresistingly toward him and kissed her on the lips.

"May I call you Dora after this?"

"Yes."

"And will you call me Fred?"

"If you wish me to."

"I do. Now I will take you to the nearest house. You cannot go all the way home in this



dripping state. You can stay with the people until I can go home, change my clothes, go to your home and tell your mother what occurred, assure her that you are safe and bring you dry garments to put on."

Dora made no objection to this arrangement, and Fred picked up his jacket, hat and shoes, which he found where he had discarded them. They had to walk a quarter of a mile to a neat cottage close to the river, where the girl was at once received and accorded every attention that her condition required, while Fred went on toward Brentwood, walking at a brisk pace to keep his blood in circulation and ward off a possible cold.

"Why, Fred, where have you been?" exclaimed his mother, on catching sight of his bedraggled appearance as he entered the house.

"I've been in the river, mother," he replied with a laugh, as he kissed her and then backed away so that she might not come in contact with his wet clothes.

Mrs. Stuart was just recovering from a severe illness, and looked somewhat pale and weak. She was seated in a plain rocker by the window overlooking the little garden which lay between their unpretentious cottage and the street. Fred had hired a little girl, a neighbor's daughter, to come in and attend to the housework and do such plain cooking as was necessary while his mother was under the weather.

"In the river!" exclaimed Mrs. Stuart, aghast.

"Yes, mother. Dora Darling was out sailing in Luke Jenkins' new boat. An accident happened, and she was thrown into the water just above the rapids. I saw the peril she was in, jumped into the river, and after a good deal of trouble succeeded in getting her out. I'll tell you the particulars later on, as I want to change my clothes now. Then I've got to go down to her home and tell her folks and take dry clothes to the cottage where I left her."

"I hope you won't catch cold after your bath, my son," said his mother, anxiously.

"Oh, I guess not, mother," replied Fred, with an air of confidence. "I kept on a kind of jog trot all the way up here, and my blood is all in a glow."

"Then don't delay changing your garments."

Inside of ten minutes Fred came downstairs rigged out from head to foot in dry clothes. Then his mother insisted that he have his supper before he went over to the Darling home, a few blocks away.

He didn't waste many minutes over it, for it was quite dark now, and he guessed that Dora's parents must be uneasy over her absence, for they knew she left home with the expectation of going on the river in the new sailboat, though her mother never would have consented to the arrangement if she had suspected that Luke did not intend to take his boatman with them. Mrs. Darling opened the front door.

"Good-evening, Mr. Stuart," she said with a pleasant smile. "I thought it was Dora. Luke Jenkins persuaded her to take a sail on the river in his new boat this afternoon, and she hasn't got home yet. I am beginning to feel a little anxious about her, though I dare say that's silly of me, as she may have been invited to stay to tea at the Jenkinses. Come in."

Fred entered the pleasant sitting-room.

"You will probably be surprised, Mrs. Darling, when I tell you I have come from your daughter with a message," began Fred.

"Indeed! It can't be that anything has happened to her?" she replied in some alarm.

"There is no reason for you to be frightened, Mrs. Darling. I assure you that, aside from a good ducking in the river, she is all right."

"Do you mean to tell me that Dora fell out of young Jenkins' boat into the river?"

"I am sorry to say she did."

Mrs. Darling turned white.

"And where is Dora now?" she asked in nervous tones.

"At a small cottage near the river, about a mile and a half from here."

"I must go to her at once," said the lady, rising in an agitated way.

"It is not necessary that you should go, Mrs. Darling. I will see that she gets home safe and sound. I will take her a bundle of dry clothes if you will make it up for me, and as soon as she is dressed she will come back with me."

"You are quite sure she escaped without injury?"

"Yes, Mrs. Darling."

"Do you know how the accident happened? Did the boat upset?"

"The trouble occurred through Luke's mismanagement as he started to alter the boat's course just above the rapids."

"But he had the boatman with him, didn't he?"

"No, he did not. He told Miss Dora that he could sail the craft all right himself, and assured her that the boat couldn't sink, which may be quite true, as I understand that she has air-tight tanks built into her. She didn't want to go with him at first, but he talked her into it."

"The silly child."

"When the boom swung around as the boat came about on a new tack the rope attached to the end of it, and which Luke held in his hand, slipped out of his grasp. In some way it caught about Miss Dora's arm and she was dragged into the water."

Mrs. Darling clasped her hands and shuddered.

"And how was she saved?"

"Well, fortunately I happened to be standing on the bank nearly opposite the boat at the time, so I jumped into the river and pulled her out."

Fred was too modest to go into the circumstances of the case, and made his story as brief as possible.

"How can I thank you enough, Mr. Stuart?" exclaimed Dora's mother, little thinking how much she really owed the brave boy seated by her side. "My daughter might have been drowned but for you. You may be sure we shall always feel very grateful to you for what you did for our dear child."

"Don't mention it, Mrs. Darling. I don't think I did any more than my duty."

"You must be a good swimmer. I have always dreaded Snake River—the current is so swift. Did you not say the accident happened near the rapids?"

"I did. It is a very dangerous locality."

"It is indeed. I am so thankful Dora escaped



so easily. She ought not to have trusted herself in that boat without the boatman was on board. Is Luke Jenkins with her at the cottage?"

"He is not. He went home in his sailboat soon after the mishap."

"When did it take place?"

"About half-past four."

"Three hours ago. If he left for his home so soon I wonder he didn't come right over here and tell me all about the affair. Surely he has had time to do so."

"I guess he didn't have the courage to do it. He really doesn't know that Dora has been saved from the river."

"Doesn't know it!" almost gasped Mrs. Darling. "Why, what do you mean?"

"I'm afraid he believes that Miss Dora was drowned."

"Didn't he see you go to her assistance?"

"No," replied Fred, shaking his head. "He was too much frightened at the time. If a couple of men hadn't turned up to his aid it is probable both he and his boat would have gone down the rapids, and he might have lost his life."

"But you say he went home in his boat immediately after the accident. Surely he wouldn't have done that if he hadn't known that my child was safe, for she was presumed to be in his care while on the boat. I should have thought he would have wanted to carry her right home with him."

"The men who were in the boat with him sailed about the spot trying to catch sight of Miss Dora. I saw them plainly, for at the time I was clinging to a rock with your daughter, who was unconscious. They didn't see us, and finally they gave up the search and headed the sailboat for Brentwood."

"I don't know what to think of Luke Jenkins," replied Mrs. Darling. "If he abandoned Dora in such a shameful manner I shall never want to see him in this house again. Nor will my child have anything further to do with him."

"Well, you can talk with your daughter about that. If you will prepare that bundle I will carry it to her at once. Then you may expect me back with her in an hour or so."

Mrs. Darling hastened to get the bundle ready, and Fred left with it at once. An hour and a half later he left the girl at her home, politely refusing to go in this time, in spite of Dora's entreaties, for he didn't want to be made a hero of.

A week later Mr. Fisher sent Fred and an assistant named Bert up river to Swan Creek to do some surveying. They went in a sailboat owned by a man named Barclay. Fred managed the boat, as he was a crack sailor. It would take them all day to finish the work on which they were bent, and they had stocked the locker of the boat with the necessary provisions.

## CHAPTER V.—From Swan Creek to Clear Lake by Way of the Ravine.

The wind was rather light, and as the river had a good many bends in it, it took the boys some time to reach Swan Creek.

"What time is it?" asked Bert, after they had

hailed down the sail and moored the catboat to the shore at the head of the creek.

Fred looked at his watch.

"It is one o'clock," he said.

"Hello! Where did you get that gold repeater?" asked Bert, opening his eyes as he noticed the fine gold self-winder that Fred displayed.

"Where did I get it?"

"Yes; where did you get it? I never saw you have anything but a silver watch before."

"Well, that timepiece was presented to me yesterday."

"The deuce you say. I wish somebody would present me with one."

"It's a fine one, isn't it?"

"Bet your life it is. Who was so good as to give you such a valuable turnip?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Darling."

"Oh, I see. They gave it to you for pulling Dora Darling out of the rapids. Well, you earned it all right. I wouldn't take the risk you did for a bushel of gold watches."

"Neither would I. I went into the water to save Dora from drowning. I didn't look for nor expect a reward for doing that."

"But you got it just the same," grinned Bert.

"I certainly couldn't refuse to accept this token of her parents' gratitude when they had bought it especially for me, could I?"

"Well, hardly. It's a bully one all right."

"I'm very much pleased with it," replied Fred, returning the elegant watch to his vest pocket. "Now, old man, just carry that stone ashore and I'll start in and cook a pot of coffee. That, with some sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs, will answer for the present, I guess."

Bert watched Fred prepare the coffee with some interest, and when it was ready he declared it was as good as he had ever drank at home.

"You're all to the good as a cook, Fred," he said, enthusiastically.

"Oh, come now, aren't you just a trifle too quick in praising me? Maybe you'll feel like singing a different tune when you taste my bacon and eggs."

"I'm willing to take the chances," grinned Bert, as he finished his last sandwich.

"All right," replied Fred. "Let's get busy."

He stepped aboard the catboat and got his theodolite, leaving the rest of the implements to his assistant to carry.

"Mr. Fisher told me to follow the ravine to the lake," remarked Fred, as he started off into the thicket.

"Where is the ravine?" asked Bert.

"It must be somewhere around here."

They walked straight ahead at a venture, Fred in the lead, and before they knew they had entered the ravine they found themselves in a narrow gully-like enclosure which seemed to answer to the description.

"We seem to have struck it all right," said Fred.

"I can't say that I'm dead stuck on it as a place to walk through with the load I have."

"I thought you considered this all fun?" grinned his companion.

"This part of it isn't fun," grunted Bert, as he stepped around a big rock. "The place is full of brush, decayed trees, rocks, and I don't know



what. I'll need a new pair of shoes when I get back to Brentwood. Do you think there's any wild animals in these hills?"

"No. Who put that idea into your head?" asked Fred.

"I thought there might be. This place looks like a wilderness. It's a wonder there wouldn't be a few Indians about."

"How would you like to meet one with his war paint on and a tomahawk in his hand, eh?" laughed Fred.

"Not on your tintype. I like to read about 'em in stories, but that is as far as my curiosity goes. Say, how much further have we got to go in this ravine?"

"Ask me something easy, Bert. I never was here before."

"Didn't Mr. Fisher tell you?"

"He said the distance between the creek and the lake was about three miles."

"I'd be willing to swear I've walked six already. Hold on, let's take another rest."

Fred was willing, for the afternoon was warm, and he admitted that the walking was anything but good.

"I should think we might find a better way to go and come than this," said Bert, as he mopped the perspiration from his brow.

"We can look for a better way, but I guess this must be the shortest, or Mr. Fisher wouldn't have told me to take it."

"Was he ever up here?"

"I couldn't tell you, but I think he surveyed the next section to the one we have to tackle, for he told me where to look for a stake from which to make our start."

"What are we surveying this wild man's domain for, anyway?"

"Some capitalist has taken an option on a portion of the property about the lake shore with the idea of buying it and putting up a summer hotel."

"A summer hotel! Suffering jewsharps! How are the guests going to get there? There isn't any road running within two miles of the lake."

"A road can be built, can't it? It is only a question of time when one will be cut through, anyway."

"Well, the nearest railroad town is four miles below Brentwood on the river, and Brentwood is all of nine miles in a straight line from the lake, so I've heard. If there was only a town in the neighborhood of the creek, people wishing to stop at a hotel on the lake could come up there by boat. Then a road could be built alongside of this ravine—a nice shady road, for there are a heap of trees around here, and the hotel man could bring the people over in his stage."

"The trolley is going to be extended to Taylorville, four miles north of Brentwood, next spring. The turnpike itself runs past Jayburg, which lies two miles from the lake and five miles northwest of Taylorville. A road built from Jayburg to the lake will afford direct communication to and from Creston."

"Sure. But look at the distance—fifteen miles."

"What's the odds? Guests will come to the lake early in summer and probably stay three months. They'll only have to travel the road once each way."

"And suppose they have a lot of trunks?"

"The trolley will carry them to Taylorville as soon as it is built and goes into operation to that place. That leaves only four miles for them to be carried the rest of the distance on a wagon."

"But don't you think it would be ever so much better if there was a wharf at the creek and a road from the creek to the lake, and then, as I said before, the people could come up the river on a small steamboat."

"There wouldn't be enough travel to pay for the boat used. Now, if the river ran right through here in place of this ravine, and connected direct with the lake, the hotel man could provide himself with a steam launch to bring his guests and their baggage up from Creston without change. Then he could use the launch to take the people on short daily excursions around the lake."

"That would be fine," cried Bert. "If the river only ran through here we wouldn't be compelled to take this long walk, but could come the whole way in our boat."

"But the river doesn't run through here, so what's the use of talking about it?"

"Well, all I've got to say is that if the river had any sense it would not run this way, but send a fork through, if only to oblige us and the man who is going to build the hotel."

"He may not built, after all. It all depends on the survey, I guess."

A short walk further and they ascended an elevation that brought them in sight of as pretty a body of water as any one could wish to see.

## CHAPTER VI.—A Startling Sight.

Clear Lake was situated in a hollow surrounded on every side by the wooded hills which marked the northern boundary of Happy Valley. It ran in and out among the elevations which jutted into its waters like so many promontories. In some places it was wildly picturesque, in others serenely beautiful. As a whole, the spot needed only development to attract attention.

"I'd like to camp out here for a month," cried Bert, with great ardor.

"So would I with a gun and rod," replied Fred.

"Is there anything to shoot?"

"I'll bet the underbrush is full of rabbits."

"Say, what's the matter with our coming here when we get our vacation?" asked Bert, eagerly.

"Mr. Fisher might not let us both off at the same time. He's very busy this year, and I expect things will be lively all summer."

"Well, we can try and fix it up somehow."

"I hope so. I wouldn't object to a week up in this section, say during August or September."

"I'll leave the matter for you to arrange. The boss thinks a lot of you, and I guess you can work him around to look at the idea in the right way."

"I'll see what I can do about it. Now you sit down here and hold my instrument. I'm going to hunt for that stake. Here's a piece of chamois. You can amuse yourself brightening up the instruments."

After a short search Fred found a hard-wood stake wedged in between two rocks. This marked



the section which had been surveyed two years before. He called Bert up.

"You see this stake?" asked Fred.

"Sure I do. It's plain enough, isn't it?"

"This marks the section joining on to the one the hotel man has the option on. From here we strike a line due west. Fit the tripod and get the chain ready."

Fred got his level, and sighting through the telescope told Bert to carry the steel chain to a certain point. They worked with such good result that by sundown they had staked off the hotel man's eighty acres, reaching from the lake back to a line beyond the crest of the hills.

"Are we done now?" asked Bert, in a tone of disappointment. "I thought it would take all day to-morrow."

"We're not done yet. We've only got the section divided off."

"What else is there to do?"

"I've got to find a suitable site for the hotel buildings."

"Ho! Can't he build the hotel anywhere within the eighty acres?"

"Of course. But the man wants to put the big building up at a reasonable cost. You must have noticed that this spot is almost all rock. He doesn't want to pay out thousands of dollars on leveling and excavating."

"Oh, I see."

"If there's no place near enough to the lake to build a hotel at a fair expenditure I suppose he'll give up the scheme."

"And it's up to you to pick out such a spot, eh?"

"If it is here, yes."

"And if it isn't?"

"That's not our funeral. All I have to do is to make my report to Mr. Fisher. If it is favorable I suppose the hotel will be put up. If it isn't—"

"It won't," grinned Bert. "I'm getting hungry. My mouth is watering for fried bacon and eggs; but I hate to walk all the way back through that ravine. Can't we leave some of these things here?"

"Yes," and Fred indicated what part of their outfit could be left in the hollow of a big tree near the lake.

Then they took up their line of march for the ravine, and before it was dark reached the creek where the catboat lay just as they had left her. Fred cooked the bacon and eggs in what Bert called "bang-up" style, and the two boys made a hearty meal.

They sat in the cockpit of the boat for an hour talking about what they would do if they spent a week's vacation up here in the wilds, and then growing sleepy they turned in for the night in the little cabin, which was fitted up with a couple of berths, one on either side on top of the lockers. They were up with the birds next morning, and after breakfast started at once for the scene of the previous day's operations.

Fred went over the ground carefully. The place was very romantic, but was so rocky that the results were disappointing. Finally he found one site several hundred feet square that he thought might answer. So he took his theodolite, which is an instrument for measuring distances, and by means of the glass and the arc determined

the height of various points in the broken landscape. Then he estimated the depth of rock.

"I'm afraid it won't do," he said to Bert. "However, that's for the hotel man to decide. It's up to him."

"Is this the most suitable place in the whole eighty acres?"

"Yes."

"It's tough if it won't do," replied Bert. "I think it's a swell place for a hotel."

"There's a better spot yonder; but that's outside this section."

"Why don't you investigate it, then?"

"Because we have nothing to do with anything outside this piece of ground."

"Well, if it was me, I'd do it just for the curiosity of finding out whether it would fill the bill or not. Unless you mean to go right back to Brentwood after we've had our lunch, why, we could put in the afternoon here."

"There's no call for us to hurry back right away, as the day would be practically over by the time we reached town. We'll stay in this neighborhood till sundown, and as the moon will be up by eight o'clock we can sail down the river in the moonlight. That will be a chance for us."

"That suits me," answered Bert, in a tone of satisfaction. "Let's eat our lunch now. Then we can leave our instruments here and take a squint about the hills."

Fred agreed, and they seated themselves on a log, took out their ham sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs, and enjoyed a pleasant al fresco meal. After they had rested Fred decided to carry out Bert's idea of examining the site on the adjoining section which seemed to fill the bill for a hotel site better than any spot on the eighty acres he had just surveyed. He carried the plan out, made his calculations and deductions and then placed the results in his pocketbook for future reference.

"What do you think about it?" asked Bert.

"If it was me that was going to build a hotel here that's the place I'd select. That's about the only place I've seen around here that is pretty free of rock and other expensive obstructions. It commands a beautiful and unobstructed view of the lake, and the waterfront, you will notice, has a fine sweeping curve to yonder point, while the beach is wider right under that cliff and offers an ideal stretch for the erection of bathhouses for still-water bathing. In a word, Bert, this spot is, in my opinion, a hundred per cent better for a hotel site than any location on the ground we came here to survey."

"Are you going to offer the suggestion to the hotel man, through Mr. Fisher?"

"No. Why should I? If there was any money in it for me I would."

"You might hint that you could point out a certain spot with such advantages as you have mentioned."

"I am afraid it wouldn't look well for me to do that. I wish I had enough money to buy this section, as I think it's the best along the lake."

"It oughtn't to cost so much in this wilderness."

"It would depend on whether the owner recognized the special advantage of the spot or not, and whether he is holding it for a future rise."



"Why don't you find out who owns it, whether it's for sale, and what the lowest price is. If it's low you might borrow the money from Mr. Darling. He'd let you have any reasonable sum, I'll bet, if he had it to spare."

"No. When I go into any speculation it must be with my own money. I don't want to be under obligations to any man to help me get ahead in the world. I'll make my own way myself. That's the only right way to succeed."

They spent the afternoon wandering about the hills and lake front, and when they got tired they returned to the spot where they had left their instruments, and, taking possession of them, started for the creek by a route to the south of the ravine.

They found that the change wasn't so much better, as the ground was quite hilly and there were many trees and big boulders to avoid. They were resting in a little hollow among the rock when Bert suddenly cried out:

"Well, what do you think of that?"

"What are you talking about?" asked Fred.

Bert pointed to a sign nailed to a tree a short distance away. The board was weather-beaten and mildewed, as if it had been there for some years, but the words were plainly decipherable. The boys read them as follows:

"No trespassing, under the penalty of the law."

"What does a man want to put such a sign as that up way out here? Does he imagine a person will hurt his old ground by walking on it or resting against the stones? He must be one of those hogs that would order the rest of the people off the earth if he came into possession of it."

"Well, the owner of these diggings has a legal right to warn every one off, but, like yourself, I don't see the sense of it in this locality. Let's be going."

The boys got up and started again. The sun was setting behind the distant hills when Fred and Bert came unexpectedly upon a startling sight. Two weather-beaten corpses, with their arms bound together, lay as they had fallen on either side of a tree.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Fred. "What's this?"

Bert, however, was too paralyzed to utter a word.

## CHAPTER VII.—Is Findings Keepings?

The boys gazed down at the withered corpses in great amazement, if not consternation. In such a lonesome spot at that hour of the afternoon their presence looked singularly weird. Beside each of the dead men was a bag, apparently full of something, tied at the mouth. The soft-crowned hat of one of the men lay on the ground, almost in reach of his hand.

"This looks mighty like a murder," breathed Fred, in a solemn tone.

"That's what it does," admitted Bert, in shaky tones.

"They were tied by both arms to that tree, and left to perish of starvation in the most cruel manner," said Fred, his voice quivering with indignation as the terrible fate of these poor fellows struck full home to him. "The men guilty of such an outrage must be pretty hard-hearted."

Bert thought so, too, though he didn't say anything. Fred laid down his surveying instrument, and examined the corpses closer.

"They've been here undiscovered a pretty long time," he went on. "They are reduced to dried skin and bone."

"That shows that people very seldom come into this locality."

"Oh, I don't know about that. We'd have passed them by if we'd gone a few yards in either direction. We'll have to report this to the head constable in town, though I dare say the matter properly concerns the Jayburg authorities, as that is the nearest town. However, we're not going to tramp away up there at this hour. We'll put the information up to our constable, and let him attend to this affair."

"I wonder what's in those bags?" asked Bert, curiously.

"Some of their duds, I guess."

"They look kind of solid."

Fred stooped down and started to lift the nearest one.

"I should think this one was solid," he said, for he had to exert his strength to pick it up. "It must weight seventy or eighty pounds."

"What can be in it?" cried Bert.

"I've a great mind to look," said Fred.

"Go on," encouraged his companion.

"Seems a kind of uncanny thing to do," replied the young surveyor, doubtfully.

Bert was much more willing for Fred to open the bag than to do it himself. In fact, if he had been there alone he never would have touched either of them, but would have left the place in short order.

"Suppose you open the other bag while I'm looking into this?" suggested Fred.

"Nixy."

"Well, here goes," said Fred, getting out his jack-knife.

He slit the cord which held the ends of the bag together. The folds of cloth fell apart and revealed—a pile of discolored gold coin.

If a dozen snakes had jumped out of the bag the two boys would have been less surprised. They gazed at the money, dumfounded for a minute or two.

"If this doesn't beat the Dutch," cried Fred. "A bag full of money."

"The other must be full of gold, too," said Bert, emboldened to step forward and heft it. "Yes, it's heavy as lead. Gee whiz, what a find."

"This is the strangest thing I ever saw or heard of. The men couldn't have tied themselves. One would think that the villains who did the deed perpetrated it in order to rob these chaps of this money. If that was their object, why should they go off and leave the money beside their victims?"

Fred scratched his head as if the problem was too deep for even his bright brains to solve.

"It's derved funny, isn't it?" said Bert, hauling the second bag in his direction, and regarding it with a longing eye.

"It isn't funny at all—it's mighty mystifying, that's what it is," returned the young surveyor.

"Well, what's the use trying to find the reason. The money is ours, isn't it, since we have found it."



There must be five or six thousand dollars in each of these bags. You and I are rich."

"I don't think we have a right to keep it," said Fred, doubtfully.

"Why not? Who has a better right?"

"These men may have wives and families somewhere. The money ought to go to them."

"Ho! They look like tramps to me. Besides, there's no way of identifying them. Do you mean you'd be such a chump as to turn that coin over to a constable? I should hope not. I wouldn't anyhow."

"Well, we can take it along with us, of course, and when we're satisfied that it belongs to us by right of discovery we can use it in any way we see fit."

"Don't you worry about it not belonging to us. I've got my flukes on this bag, and it will take a team of horses to get it away from me."

"It's getting dark, so we'd better hurry along. Wait a moment till I tie my bag up again."

It was nearly eight o'clock by Fred's watch when they finally reached the creek. Bert was so excited over the possession of so much money which he considered as rightfully his own that he had very little appetite for supper, notwithstanding the tramping he had done that day, and the lightness of their lunch. All the way back he could do nothing else but talk about what he was going to do with that money. Fred's appetite, however, was not particularly affected by the bag of gold which had so unexpectedly come his way. He simply dropped it into the locker under the bunk he had occupied, and taking the oil stove ashore, started in to fry the balance of the bacon and six of the remaining eggs, after he had first made the coffee, and set it on the second burner to keep warm.

"Why don't you eat, Bert?" he asked, when they sat down to their evening meal, and his companion seemed to go to sleep over his portion.

"I'm thinking about that money."

"Are you? You haven't been doing anything else since we left the spot where we found it. It isn't going to run away."

"I don't suppose it is; but it's an awful lot of coin for a fellow like me to possess."

"Well, what are you going to do with yours?" asked Bert, Yankee fashion.

"That isn't answering my question."

"I'm going to take it home, of course. What would you think I'd do with it? Leave it on the boat here for Barclay to find?"

"Hardly that."

"I've answered your question, now answer mine."

"I'm going to take my bag home, too; but I'm not going to touch it till I find out something about it."

"Then you won't touch it for a mighty long while," replied Bert, emphatically. "You'll never learn anything about it."

"How do you know I won't?"

"Those men will be buried as soon as the authorities find out the bodies are there. That'll be the end of them. They are a couple of tramps who found that money somewhere, and that's all there is to it."

"Found it, eh? Why, where would they find so much money? Stole it, you'd better say. We

must investigate and see if we can find who it was who lost that money."

"Oh, I say, what do you want to do? What kind of a chump are you?"

"No chump at all, Bert. But I believe honesty is the best policy. We have no right to keep that money if it turns out that we learn who it really belongs to."

"If we know who lost it I suppose we ought to give it up. But to go around wasting a lot of good time trying to find a needle in a haystack, when that money means so much to us, why, I don't believe in it at all," retorted Bert, doggedly.

"I don't mean to lose any time over it, because my time largely belongs to Mr. Fisher, who pays me a salary for eight hours' work a day. What I mean is we ought to make inquiries throughout the State, without stating that we had the money, in order to find out if anybody lost such a sum. If within a reasonable time we don't discover any clue to its rightful owner, then I am willing to admit we can honestly retain it."

"Well, I believe that findings is keepings. And I'm willing to bet there isn't one man in a thousand who would, under the circumstances, worry himself about who had lost the coin."

"Your views are not exactly my views, Bert, so we won't argue the question any longer. If you've eaten all you're going to, why just do your share of the kitchen work—that is, wash the dishes, while I put the stove on board, and get things in shape for starting down the river."

Bert had no objection to this division of labor, and in fifteen minutes had the dishes dry and clean on board the catboat again. Ten minutes later they sailed out of Swan Creek in the moonlight, and set their course down the crooked river for Brentwood.

## CHAPTER VIII.—Bert Meets With a Terrible Loss.

The catboat with Fred and Bert on board arrived at her moorings at about eleven o'clock that night. Mr. Barclay, her owner, wasn't to be seen around, as he had gone to bed a good two hours before, so Fred tied her securely to the wharf and left her. The boys, each with his bag of gold coin, and a part of the surveying instruments under his other arm, set out for their homes. Fred put his bag of gold in what he considered a safe place for the night, and on the following morning, on his way to the office, he stopped at the home of the head constable of the town, and told him the story of the two dead men in the woods near Clear Lake. The police official promised to attend to the case, and Fred was satisfied. The young surveyor made his report to Mr. Fisher as soon as that gentleman appeared at the office.

"You have done very well, Fred; very well indeed. In fact, I felt confident that you would acquit yourself in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. Commencing with this week, I shall add a couple of dollars more to your salary, as an evidence of my appreciation of the growing value of your services."

"Thank you, sir."

"You well deserve the increase, and I am glad to give it to you. We are to do the survey of the



new trolley extension to Taylorville this fall, and I shall probably intrust the larger part of the work to you."

"I shall do my best to satisfy you, Mr. Fisher."

"You needn't tell me that. I know that whatever passes through your hands will be done well."

Fred returned to his routine work, and Mr. Fisher went out shortly afterward.

"Did you hear the news, Fred?" asked Bert, as soon as the boss had closed the office door behind him.

"What news?"

"The Jenkins' house was burglarized last night."

"Is that really a fact?" asked Fred, with some interest.

"Sure thing."

"How came you to hear about it? I was at Constable Brown's this morning, and he never said a word about it."

"I heard it up at the post office. I guess everybody in town knows about it by this time."

"I guess so. News of that nature flies about fast in this town. Did they lose much?"

"I believe a great many things of value were taken away. Luke lost his gold watch and a five-dollar bill. The old man lost his watch and a wallet full of bills. I believe some of Mrs. Jenkins' jewelry was taken, and a lot of sterling silver articles were also pinched. Jenkins, they say, has sent to Creston for a detective."

Fred passed Luke Jenkins on the street that afternoon, and that young aristocrat didn't appear to be in an amiable frame of mind. He favored the young surveyor with a scowl. Luke was down on Fred more than ever since the brave boy pulled Dora Darling out of the rapids of Snake River. While it is true that Luke was delighted to learn that the girl had escaped from drowning, he regarded it as a personal affront that she owed her life to the boy he disliked so much. As soon as he learned that Dora was all right, he had called upon her to offer his congratulations, and to excuse his own conduct on that occasion. The servant carried his name upstairs, and then brought him word that the girl was not at home. Luke was as mad as a hornet, for he had reason to know that Dora was at home. He called on the following day, and got the same message. He went off in a huff, and when he saw her on the street that same afternoon, he wouldn't notice her, which just suited Dora, as she was determined to have nothing further to do with him.

Luke's animosity toward him didn't worry Fred for a cent. The two had never been friends at any time, and it didn't seem likely there would ever be any change in their present relationship.

Before the local bank closed for the day Fred took a japanned box to Mr. Darling, and asked him to keep it for him in the bank vault. The \$6,000 in gold coin which had been in the bag was in it, and the boy was resolved not to touch a penny of it until he was satisfied he might do so with justice to himself. Fred would have liked to have persuaded Bert to make a similar disposition of his share of the gold, but his office associate wouldn't listen to the suggestion even for a moment. He clung to his original argument that findings is keepings, at least in that case, and he stowed the bag of money at the bottom of his trunk in his room, where he could look at and handle the eagles and double eagles whenever he

was disposed. He had counted it, and found he had something over \$5,000. The night following the robbery at the Jenkins mansion he counted it over once more with immense satisfaction.

Next morning he found his window open from the bottom, and was rather surprised at the circumstance. After breakfast he had occasion to go to his trunk for something, and found its contents all topsy-turvy. With his heart in his throat he looked down in the corner where he had stowed the bag of money. The bag with its precious contents was missing. He threw everything out of his trunk in his frantic search for his treasure, but there was not a sign of it anywhere. Bert was so disheartened over his loss that he scarcely had the courage to go to the office. He arrived half an hour late, and his face showed that something had gone wrong with him.

"What's the matter, Bert?" asked Fred, wondering what ailed him.

"Nothing," replied the other, shortly.

"Nothing, eh? Why, you look as if you'd lost your best friend."

"I've lost something as good as that."

"What did you lose?"

"I've lost that bag of money I brought from the hills."

"You have!" whistled Fred.

"I have, honor bright."

"Why, how came you to lose it?"

"Somebody entered my room last night, and went through my trunk. That's where I kept it, and this morning it wasn't there."

"Well, upon my word, that's hard luck. You haven't any suspicion as to the identity of the thief?"

Bert, who felt like crying over his loss, shook his head dejectedly.

"Tell me all the particulars," said Fred.

There wasn't much to tell, and Bert soon told all he knew.

"Some person must have seen you through the window counting that money."

"My room is on the second floor, so I don't see how anybody could have seen me."

They talked the matter over for a while, and then the subject was dropped. That night the Darling house was entered and plundered of silverware, jewelry, and pieces of valuable bric-a-brac.

## CHAPTER IX.—The Naphtha Launch That Visited Brentwood.

Two bold burglaries committed within three days threw the good people of Brentwood into a fever of consternation. Until the Jenkins home was entered and robbed such a crime hadn't been known in the town for years. The detective who came from Creston to aid the Brentwood constabulary declared that both jobs had been done by a professional crook, possibly two, of more than ordinary ability. The residents could talk of nothing else—morning, noon, and night—but the robberies. Therefore when, on the succeeding night, the house of Mr. Starbuck, the wealthy president of the wagon works, was cleaned out of money, jewelry, and various small articles of considerable value, the feeling in town developed into a kind of panic, and the people began to ask



one another who would be the next victim. Abner Jenkins announced a reward of \$1,000 for the apprehension and conviction of the criminal or criminals. Mr. Starbuck also posted a reward of the same amount, while Mr. Darling and the town council each added \$500. A second detective was called in, and the entire police department of Brentwood became active in the hope of earning the money and adding to their reputation as sleuths.

A bright watch was kept in the neighborhood of the homes of the well-to-do residents, where another attempt was looked for, but it didn't come. The crook or crooks, either satisfied for the present with the results obtained, or rendered wary by the vigilance of the officers of the law, made no further effort to enrich themselves at the expense of the Brentwood people. The detectives followed up several clues that came their way, but in the end they amounted to nothing. During all this time a dainty-looking naphtha launch, which had come up the river two days before the first burglary, passing the rapids through the tortuous channel which alone permitted a safe passage of that dangerous stretch of navigation, lay off Barclay's wharf. A gentleman, with a profusion of glossy black whiskers, who said his name was Redgrave, and announced himself as the owner of the pretty boat, was much in evidence around town, looking at available sites for the erection of a bolt and nut works, which he said a New York company was proposing to erect either at Creston or Brentwood. His presence excited considerable interest among those who learned about his errand, as he hinted that in case the works were established at Brentwood the P. Y. & D. railroad, which passed through Creston, would build a branch to the former place, a proposition the company was known to have been considering for more than a year past, and had even gone so far as to have the proposed right of way surveyed. This gentleman was accompanied by a bright-eyed, smoothly shaven man, whom he introduced as Mr. Jax, who was to be manager of the proposed works. When they were not looking at vacant plots of ground they were wandering around the residence section of town where the better class houses were situated, apparently admiring the architectural beauties of the different residences. As the smooth-faced man intimated that he intended to build a handsome home in Brentwood if the works were located there, he was courteously received, and allowed to inspect the home of many of those who thought he might one day become a neighbor of theirs. The gentlemen when on shore left the launch in charge of a stout, florid complexioned individual, who was presumed to be the navigator and general factotum on the boat. About eleven o'clock on the morning following the last burglary the launch left anchorage and headed down the river. One of the Creston detectives was on the wharf talking to Barclay at the time, but her departure didn't seem to give him any concern. Evidently Messrs. Redgrave and Jax were above suspicion. Two hours later Fred Stuart, accompanied by Dora Darling, came down to the same wharf, embarked on Mr. Barclay's catboat, and also started down the river. Fred was going to Creston on business for Mr. Fisher, and for reasons of his own he chose to go by water instead of taking the

convenient trolley. He had invited Dora to make the trip with him. Clearly both Dora and her mother placed a world of confidence in the young surveyor when neither raised the slightest opposition to his proposal, though both knew the boat would have to essay the crooked channel in the rapids in making the journey.

"Isn't it a delightful afternoon?" said Dora, enthusiastically.

"It is, indeed," replied Fred. "You don't seem to be a bit nervous, though the last time you were out on the river you nearly lost your life."

"Why should I be?" she asked with a smile. "Aren't you with me?"

Fred flushed with pleasure at her words.

"I am glad both you and your mother feel so confident of my ability to take care of you," he said with a smile. "I was almost afraid she would object to you going when I told her where I was bound."

"We both felt that you would not have invited me if you thought I would be exposed to any real danger."

"That's right, Dora. I know the channel through the rapids like a book, for I have been through there more than a dozen times. A cool head, a steady hand, and perfect knowledge of the navigation of the channel is all that is necessary to carry a boat safely through. Still, even so, I wouldn't take you along only that the day is a perfect one for the trip."

"Yes, Fred, I know you will take the best of care of me; so does mother. In fact, I have such confidence in you that I would even face a little risk under your protection."

"You make me feel very happy to hear you say that. You have had some evidence what I am willing to go through for your sake. I promise you that I shall always be ready to stand by you under any circumstances. More than that I couldn't say."

"You're the best boy in the world, Fred Stuart," said Dora, placing her hand confidently on his arm, while a humid look came into her pretty eyes.

"Thanks," he laughed. "Let us talk about something else."

And they did, until the bend in the river brought them close upon the rapids, and a somewhat startling sight arrested their attention. It was the naphtha launch wedged in between a couple of the black rocks which dotted the rapids. Redgrave, Jax and the florid-complexioned man were standing in the stern in an animated consultation. Apparently the boat's navigator had made some mistake in reckoning, and thereby run the launch into a serious dilemma.

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Dora. "That pretty boat is aground."

"You mean she's on the rocks, and in a bad place, too," replied Fred, regarding the stranded launch with great interest.

"Do you think they will be able to save her?"

"If she hasn't stove in her bows I dare say it will be possible to haul her off and save her. I would not insure her for much as she now stands."

"Isn't it a shame!"

"Yes, it's too bad, for she's a fine-looking boat. I'd like to own such a craft myself. Then I could take you sailing on calm nights in the summer,



when the moon shines on the river, and the wind has gone to sleep."

"Wouldn't that be just too delightful!" she cried, clasping her hands in ecstasy.

"I should say so."

At that moment the occupants of the launch caught sight of the catboat, and Mr. Jax immediately began to signal Fred.

Fred answered the signal and maneuvered the catboat over to the stern of the launch. Then Mr. Jax asked Fred to help him get the launch afloat with the aid of the catboat. Fred assented and a rope was fastened to a cleat on the sailboat. Fred swung the catboat into the wind and the rope strained, but the launch never moved. Several attempts were tried with no success.

#### CHAPTER X.—What Happened to Fred Stuart in the Cabin of the Launch.

"It's no go," said Fred, at last, throwing the catboat into the wind so that her sail shivered and she floated back again to her former position alongside the launch.

Messrs. Jax and Redgrave were clearly much disappointed with the unsatisfactory result, and they went forward and held a consultation in tones which did not reach the ears of those aboard the catboat. Having reached some conclusion, they returned to the stern, and Mr. Jax said:

"Young man, we shall have to ask you to take us off."

"Then you have decided to abandon the launch?" asked Fred.

"We can't help ourselves."

There was another person on board the launch, whose name was Yates, he heard Mr. Jax call him.

"Probably you can get a tug at Creston to come up here and drag her off. As long as your boat is not injured to any extent it will pay you."

"We will consider your suggestion," replied Mr. Jax. "In the meantime——"

"You want me to take you and your associates down the river?"

"Exactly."

"Very well. Step aboard."

"We have some valuable stuff that we must also transfer," said Mr. Jax.

"If we can carry it I have no objection."

"Step aboard here and I will show it to you," said the mogul, glibly.

"I don't like to leave this boat, lest by some mishap it might——"

"She won't run away. If the young lady is afraid to remain alone Redgrave here will keep her company."

"Certainly," said the man with the glossy beard, jumping into the cockpit of the catboat without waiting for an invitation from Fred.

"It isn't necessary for me to see what you want to tranship, I guess," replied the boy, looking at Mr. Jax. "You can bring the stuff aboard."

"I would prefer that you saw it," said the mogul of the launch, in a tone which intimated that he wouldn't take no for an answer.

Fred was disposed to hold back, but finally concluded that there wasn't much danger of his boat getting adrift. He was also a bit curious

to see the interior arrangements of the handsome little launch, which he judged must be in keeping with her exterior, so he stepped on board of her. Mr. Jax led the way to the cabin, into which Yates had previously disappeared in obedience to some private signal from him. Fred was duly impressed by the elegant surroundings he found below. The cabin had been fitted up regardless of cost. There was every imaginable convenience there, including four berths, two on either side, which were built to shut up on the principle of sleeping-car berths. The interior decorations were in white and gold, and there was lots of what is called gingerbread work. In fact, the cabin would of itself have made a boudoir suitable for a lady of wealth and taste.

"Sit down, Stuart," said Mr. Jax, familiarly, pushing the boy toward a luxurious lounge, "and have a drink with me."

"I never drink, thank you," replied Fred, as the man reached for a cut glass decanter, containing an amber-colored liquor, which stood in a swinging rack under the skylight.

"Don't drink!" exclaimed the mogul of the boat, looking hard at him.

"No, sir. I have never drank a drop of liquor in my life, and I don't mean to. I don't approve of the practice, especially in boys."

"Oh, indeed," answered Mr. Jax, with a sneer. "Do you smoke?" he asked, as he helped himself to a glassful of the liquor. "I've got a box of fine Havanas here which reach the spot every time."

"I do not smoke either," replied Fred, firmly.

"Oh, you don't. Quite a model young man, aren't you," he said, with a disagreeable grin.

Fred made no reply, though his looks plainly showed that he resented this kind of conduct on the man's part. While they were talking, Yates was busily engaged in lifting bundles and packages from the run or hold of the launch through a trap or opening in the floor of the cabin which had been concealed under a heavy Ottoman rug. Fred wondered at the quantity and variety of these packages, which made a big pile on the floor.

"Put that stuff into the cabin of the catboat," ordered Mr. Jax.

"You seem to have quite a cargo on board," said Fred.

"Yes. These are samples of work manufactured by the company," replied the mogul of the launch, glibly.

As he spoke, Yates, who had picked up as many of the bundles as he could carry, accidentally dropped one. The fastenings came apart as it struck the floor, and an elegant silver water pitcher, with the name "Darling" engraved upon it, lay exposed; on its cover flying open, a shower of silver spoons of different sizes flew over the rug.

Mr. Jax uttered an oath, and began hastily to recover the scattered spoons and return them to the pitcher. As for Fred, he was fairly thunderstruck. He recognized the pitcher as one of the treasures of the Darling house which had been stolen a couple of nights before with a lot of other valuable property. Being a quick-witted boy, this discovery took his breath away, and a terrible suspicion of the true character of these men took possession of his mind. Mr. Jax cast



a glance at the boy as he was rewrapping the pitcher, and from the expression of Fred's face he deemed some explanation to be in order.

"When I said these were all samples of our work I forgot that Redgrave has a quantity of his household silver on board," he said, with a curious laugh. "This is some of it."

That settled the matter for Fred, since he knew the man was deliberately lying. He rose to his feet with a flush of indignation on his face.

"Do you mean to tell me that that silver pitcher belongs to Mr. Redgrave?" he said, facing Mr. Jax.

"Certainly it does," replied the man, as he tied the last knot.

"How, then, it is that it is marked with the name 'Darling?'"

"Eh!" exclaimed Mr. Jax, with a menacing look in his eyes.

"I say it is engraved with the word 'Darling,'" replied the boy, stoutly. "That is one of the pieces of silverware stolen the other night from the Darling residence in Brentwood."

Mr. Jax sprang to his feet and shook his fist in Fred's face.

"Tak care, young man, you are going too far."

"I know what I am talking about. How came it to be in your possession?"

The man's answer was a quick blow which stretched the boy out on the floor. Before Fred could recover Mr. Jax was upon him like a tiger, and had a revolver pressed against his temple.

"You appear to know too much for your own good," he said, in a tense tone. "I see it is necessary to teach you a lesson."

At that moment Yates returned to the cabin.

"Get me a piece of rope, Bill," said the mogul of the launch. "This young fellow appears too dangerous to our interests to be allowed too much scope of action."

The rope was produced by Yates, and Mr. Jax bound Fred's arms tightly behind his back, and then secured him to one of the legs of the table.

"There, young man, I think you won't give us any further trouble," said Mr. Jax, grimly, as he rose to his feet. "You will stay there till the launch goes to pieces, or some one comes from the shore to take a look at the boat, which won't be soon, in my opinion."

"So you and your companions are the mysterious thieves who have been robbing the people of our town? The law will soon put you where you belong."

"We're not worrying about the law," retorted Mr. Jax. "Before you get the chance to squeal, if you ever do, we'll be beyond the boundaries of this State. We've hoodwinked smarter sleuths than any you can muster in this locality. Hurry the rest of the stuff on board the catboat, Yates."

Mr. Jax took a hand himself at the work, and before many minutes had passed all of the stolen property, which amounted to a considerable pile, had been transferred to the sailboat. The decanter of liquor and a number of other articles belonging to the launch, including the valuable rugs, were also taken away.

"You'll pay dearly for this outrage," said Fred, as Mr. Jax paused in front of him to say a final word.

"Bah!" replied the man, contemptuously.

"What do you mean to do with Miss Darling?" asked Fred, anxiously.

"So her name is Darling, eh?"

"Yes."

"She is a member of the family that you say was robbed, is she? Very well. We'll look out for her. Don't worry about her."

The crook favored Fred with a significant smile.

"If any harm comes to her," cried the boy, vehemently, "I'll never rest till I bring you to justice."

"Talk is cheap," sneered Mr. Jax. "You'll be lucky if you come out of this alive."

He examined the fastenings which held the boy, and being satisfied with the inspection, he made Fred an ironical bow and left the cabin, and a moment later the launch.

"Great Scott! What will be the end of this? And what will happen to Dora?" groaned the boy, struggling in vain to release himself.

A half-suppressed scream came to his ears from without.

"My heaven! That was Dora's voice. What are they doing to her?"

He writhed and squirmed desperately at his bonds, but there was no getting loose from them. He was simply frantic over the unfortunate situation of the girl. But he could do nothing, and from certain sounds which presently ceased, he knew the sailboat was leaving the stranded launch and heading down the river.

## CHAPTER XI.—How Bert Barlow Turned Up On the Launch.

The reader can easier imagine than we can describe the feelings of Fred Stuart as he lay helpless in the cabin of the stranded launch and realized that he had been abandoned in a desperate situation. He knew only too well that the chance of an immediately rescue from the shore was slight. The banks of the river at this point were lonely and deserted. There was a creek, the one over which Mr. Fisher had built a bridge, lately completed, on the Brentwood side, and a narrow inlet on the other. But these little waterways were seldom navigated. There was a marsh below the inlet, where people went shooting in the fall and winter, but no one ever strolled there at this season of the year.

The boy's only chance was that a boat from up or down the river might come along and their occupants board the stranded launch out of curiosity. His chief concern was for Dora Darling. He hoped the rascals would put her ashore at Creston, whence she would be able to reach home by the trolley. But he was more than half afraid they would not.

"I fear they will carry her some distance down the river till they think it safe to put her ashore and let her shift for herself. Those chaps won't take any chances by giving her an opportunity to set the officers on their trail. What a slick trio of rascals they are! To rob three of our best homes in Brentwood, carry their plunder aboard of this launch, and then walk around town afterward under the very noses of the constables and detectives. That shows their nerve and skill,



and proves that they are old and experienced hands at the business. They will not be easily caught. I'd give everything I own in the world if I hadn't invited Dora to come with me on this trip. Her parents will never forgive me, and I am sure I'll never forgive myself if anything happens to her. It was dreadfully unfortunate."

Half an hour passed away, during which Fred made many unavailing attempts to release himself, yet he was not disposed to give up to despair as long as an ounce of strength remained in his arms. While he was resting from a prolonged effort to slip one hand from the cord which held it to the table, he felt something bump against the stern of the launch.

"Help! Help! Hilloa!" he shouted as loud as he could.

His back was to the cabin door, which Mr. Jax had closed as a precautionary measure. He waited a moment or two, and then repeated the cry. He was sure now that somebody was walking about outside looking the boat over.

"Surely he'll come into the cabin before he thinks of leaving the launch," thought Fred.

He was quite right in thinking so. Anybody boarding a stranded boat in the situation of the launch would certainly take a peep into the cabin after satisfying his curiosity outside. That is just what the visitor in this instance did. He put his hand on the knob of the cabin door and opened it. Apparently the place was deserted, for Fred was out of sight behind the table cover. But the prisoner heard the door open, and he called out again.

"Help! Please come here and release me."

The visitor was startled and hung back. He didn't see the owner of the voice anywhere.

"Are you going to help me out of this?" asked Fred, impatiently.

"Who are you, and where are you?" inquired a voice, which the young surveyor instantly recognized, and with some astonishment, as belonging to Bert Barlow.

"Is that you, Bert?" he said, eagerly.

"Why, Fred, where are you?" returned the amazed Bert, now reassured, stepping into the cabin.

"Tied to one of the legs of the table."

"Why, how came you to be aboard of this craft?" asked Bert, coming forward to the spot where his friend and associate sat bunched up on the floor. "My gracious! what has happened to you?"

"Cut me loose and I'll tell you all about it, old chap. But how happens it that you're here and not at the office?"

"The boss let me off for the half day, as there was a consultation seance at the office, and it wasn't large enough to hold us all conveniently."

"That was it, eh?" replied Fred, as Bert began sawing away at the cords which secured his arms. "What brought you down the river this far?"

"I rowed down in one of Barclay's boats, intending to fish up the creek. I saw this launch high and dry almost on the rocks, and came out to look it over."

"Mighty lucky thing for me that you turned up in this neighborhood," said Fred, shaking himself free and standing up. "But I'm in a terrible scrape."

"You mean you were before I cut you loose," grinned Bert.

"No, I don't. I'm free, thank goodness, but I'm not out of the scrape by any means."

"You'll be out of it as soon as I take you to the shore."

"No, I won't."

"Why not?" in some surprise.

"Just listen, and I'll tell you what the trouble is. You know Mr. Fisher sent me on business to Creston?"

"Sure. That's why I'm astonished to find you here on the river. I supposed you'd taken the trolley down."

"No. I came this far in Barclay's catboat."

"The dickens you did! Where is the catboat?"

"Three scoundrels have gone off in her."

"Three scoundrels!"

"Yes. The crooks the police are looking for."

"Do you mean those burglars?"

"I do. They came to Brentwood in this launch."

"You don't mean it!" incredulously.

"I do mean it. And you'll never guess who they are."

"How could I?"

"Two of them are the persons who have been in town for a week past pretending to look for a building site for a bogus New York company that expected to build a bolt and nut works either at Creston or Brentwood."

"You're joking, ain't you?"

"Not on your life! Their names are Jax and Redgrave."

"I've seen 'em. One had a big black beard, while the other was smooth shaven."

"Those are the chaps. They left town some time this morning, and ran their boat on the rocks, just as you see her. I left Barclay's wharf at one o'clock with Dora Darling."

"With who?"

"Dora Darling. She was to Creston with me for the sail."

"Where is she now, then?" asked Bert, looking around as if he expected to see the girl somewhere about.

"She's in the hands of those villains. They carried her off."

"Good gracious!"

"We found them here, and tried to help them out of their scrape. We did not suspect that they were the burglars. The fellow Jax induced me to come aboard the launch to see some stuff he wanted to transfer to the sailboat after I had agreed to take them down to Creston. I wouldn't have dreamed of their real identity even then if it hadn't been that one of the packages came apart, and I recognized some of the Darling stolen property. Then Jax, seeing that the cat was out of the bag, knocked me down and tied me up as you found me. After he had done so he and his associates put off in the catboat, on board of which Dora had remained all the time."

"And they have actually carried her off?"

"They have?"

"Where to?"

"Heaven only knows. That's what worries me."

"What are you going to do about it?"

"We must go ashore right away and telegraph down the river."

"If you could get this launch off the rocks we could give them a lively chase, and catch 'em, too,"



for this boat will go three feet to the catboat's one."

"But she won't come off."

"How do you know she won't?"

"Because I tried to pull her off with the sailboat."

"You did?"

"I did, and it wouldn't work."

"That's too bad," said Bert. "Let's get out on deck and see if we can't do something to get her afloat. She doesn't seem to be hurt at all."

"She isn't hurt. Hasn't even sprung a leak the least bit."

"Could you run the engine if we got afloat?"

"Yes. I've practiced on that small launch of Barclay's."

The boys went up on deck. Fred thought the matter over a moment, then he said:

"Come forward with me."

He looked over the bows and thought the launch was not so badly wedged in as she had appeared to be at first.

"I wonder if I couldn't pry her off. She's light, and ought to move easily if the right purchase is brought to bear. There's standing room on these rocks, so I'm going to see what I can do."

Fred had noticed a long bar of steel in the cabin, and that had put the idea into his head of trying to use it on the launch. He went down and got it, then he took off his shoes and stockings, and rolled his trousers up above his knees.

"Now, Bert, hand me the end of that rope."

He tied it securely under his armpits.

"You hold on to this and steady me, so the tide doesn't carry me off my feet."

"All right," replied Bert.

Fred, grasping the bar with one hand, stepped down on the rocks. Then he dug it into the rock and tried to work the launch backward. She didn't seem inclined to budge. In the midst of his operations a big piece of rock broke off. Fred persevered and another piece went. This exposed a couple of feet of the boat's bow on that side, and then Fred saw that the force of the stream was making the launch swerve around at the stern. That showed he had weakened the grip of the rocks. He jumped on board, started the engine, and reversed the movement of the propellers. To his great satisfaction in about two minutes the launch floated clear.

Fred backed the launch into clear water. A consultation was now entered into, and it was agreed that they go in pursuit of the burglars, so the boat was sent in that direction. Bert now investigated the cabin and came upon a small closet in which he found a fine magazine rifle, fully loaded.

When they reached Creston a lookout was kept for Barclay's sailboat.

As they rounded a crooked part of the river they suddenly spied the catboat right ahead, but were at the same time sighted by the burglars.

## CHAPTER XII.—Fred and Bert Come Out On Top.

The launch was headed for the sailboat, and the two boys soon saw that the burglars were prepared to make things lively for them.

"Keep off or I'll shoot!" roared Jax, flourishing a revolver in a belligerent way.

"The chap with the whiskers has a shooter, too," said Bert, who was getting nervous over the prospect of a bullet coming his way.

"I see he has," answered Fred, coolly.

"What are you going to do?"

"My first move is to try and persuade them to give Dora up."

"And suppose they won't?"

"Then there'll be something doing, that's all," said Fred, grimly.

"Are you going to keep away or not?" demanded Jax.

"I want you to put the young lady ashore," replied Fred.

"Put nothing ashore. We'll let her go when we get good and ready. If you don't sheer off at once I'll shoot you. This is the last warning I'm going to give you, and when I shoot I'll shoot to hit you, d'ye understand?"

Jax evidently meant business from the tone of his voice and his actions.

"You'd better give the young lady up if you know when you're well off," answered Fred, altering the launch's course to one parallel with the sailboat.

Jax laughed insolently.

"Have you got any cops in the cabin, young man, that you carry such a high tone?" he asked. "You got out of the scrape we left you in sooner than we thought you would. And you managed to get the launch off, too. Now, I'll make a bargain with you. I'll let you have your boat and the young lady back in exchange or the launch, if you shut off power, take to your rowboat, and let the launch drift down to us."

"I'll make no such arrangement with you," retorted Fred. "I doubt if you'd keep your part of the agreement once you got possession of the launch, and had us at a disadvantage in the rowboat."

"We'll do the square thing all right. We have no use for the girl, while the launch would be off great advantage to us."

"Put Miss Darling ashore on the bank, and maybe I'll consider the matter then."

Jax turned to Redgrave, and said something to him. They talked together for a minute and then Jax spoke up again.

"We'll put the girl ashore if you'll set the launch adrift at the same time."

"No," replied Fred. "I'll tell you what I'll do with you. Work the sailboat inshore, the three of you land, and set her adrift as she is, and as soon as we get possession of her we'll run the launch close in and leave her. That's the only bargain I'll make with you. I want Miss Darling and all the stuff you stole from the houses in our town."

Jax ripped out an oath at the coolness of Fred's proposition.

"What do you think we are?" he roared, angrily. "Pull away now, or I'll put a bullet into you."

"Get under cover," said Fred to Bert.

His companion bent down out of sight.

"You refuse to give up Miss Darling, do you?" Fred called out to Jax.

The man's reply was to pull the trigger of his revolver, and a ball whistled past the boy's head.



Fred snatched up the rifle and, taking a quick aim at Jax, fired. The ball struck the crook's hand that held the revolver, and the weapon fell into the water with a splash, while the rascal uttered a howl of pain, and a volley of oaths. His companions were paralyzed for a moment with astonishment. Then both Redgrave and Yates discharged their revolvers at the intrepid boy on the launch. Their aim was hurried, and neither bullet hit Fred. The boy, however, returned the fusillade with such good effect that both of the rascals were wounded, and fell to the floor of the cockpit, leaving the boat without a guiding hand. Consequently she fell away, her sail shivered, and she lost all headway.

"Get up, Bert!" cried Fred. "I've got them now where I want them. Steer the launch alongside the Katydid, and I'll make short work of Jax if he doesn't give in."

Bert obeyed orders. Jax, however, was not conquered, by any means. With a face distorted with rage, he picked up one of his companions' weapons with his left hand, and aimed it at Fred. The boy wasn't taking any more chances than he could help, so he fired squarely at the rascal, who staggered back against the side of the little cabin with a rifle ball in his breast. The fight was over, and Fred was master of the situation.

The launch was run alongside of the sailboat and made fast.

"Keep an eye on those chaps," said the young surveyor, handing Bert the rifle.

Fred stepped into the cockpit, and without paying any attention to the wounded burglars he stuck his head in at the cabin slide.

"Dora," he said, "are you there?"

He heard a smothered exclamation, and entering the cabin found the terrified girl crouching in a corner.

"Thank heaven I have recovered you at last, Dora!" he said, advancing to her.

With a little scream of joy she sprang to her feet and rushed into his arms.

"Oh, Fred, Fred!" she sobbed. "You are safe, aren't you?"

She impulsively threw her arms around his neck and kissed him, and cried over him in a hysterical way.

"I'm all right," he replied reassuringly, feeling very happy over her tumultuous exhibition of regard for him.

"I was so afraid those men had done something dreadful to you," she cried, laying her head on his shoulder. "They left you on the launch, didn't they?"

"Yes."

"And how did you escape?"

"I'll tell you all about it later on. All I can say now is that I owe my release to Bert Barlow."

"What has happened to those men? I heard firing, and it seemed to me one or more of them were shot."

"The three of them were shot."

"Are they dead?" she asked, with a little shudder.

"No; but I couldn't say how badly they are injured. I didn't care much where I hit them when I fired."

"Did you shoot them?" she asked, opening her eyes very wide.

"I did. I was determined to save you from a situation that I knew must be terrible to you. They refused to give you up peaceably and fired upon me first, so should their wounds have a fatal result their blood will be on their own heads."

"Oh, why did they act that way toward us? What kind of men are they? I begged them to go back for you, but they only laughed at me, and said they'd put me ashore somewhere down the river at dark. I was so frightened. I could not understand their actions at all. I feared they might be crazy people who had escaped from some asylum."

"They are not crazy, Dora, but very dangerous men. They are the burglars who robbed your father's house, as well as the Jenkins and Starbuck residences."

"Oh, Fred, is that true?" with a nervous glance at the cabin entrance, through which, now that she was more composed, she could see the forms of two of the unconscious rascals huddled up in the cockpit.

"Yes, it is true. Come, let me take you on board the launch. I'm going to tow the sailboat up to Creston, and the sooner we start the better. Don't be alarmed," as she hung back. "The danger is all over."

Then she allowed him to lead her out into the cockpit, where the crooks lay. He lifted her over into the launch, and told her to run into the cabin and stay there. Fred told Bert to lower the Katydid's mainsail while he took a look at the wounded burglars. Redgrave was unconscious from the shock of a bullet which had ploughed a furrow above his temple, while Yates' injury consisted of a broken collar-bone, the ball having passed out through the back part of his neck. Jax's wound was apparently the most serious of the three, so far as Fred could see, for the bullet had passed completely through his chest, coming out through the back of his coat. He was not unconscious, but seemed to be in a bad way.

"Give me some water," he asked hoarsely of the boy.

Fred got him some water, and then gave him some of the liquor which still remained in the cut-glass decanter. This revived him, and Fred was able to get him down into the cabin, and upon one of the lockers, where he propped his head up with a pillow.

## CHAPTER XIII.—Fred Achieves Wealth and Happiness.

"Don't leave me, boy," said Jax, catching Fred by the sleeve of his jacket as he made a movement to return on deck.

"I've got to get the boat underway. It's coming on dark, and we can't go on drifting down the river."

"Promise me that you will come back. I've something of great importance to tell you—something that I want you to do for me."

His tone was so earnest and insistent that Fred, somewhat against his inclination, agreed to return after he had got the boats headed up the river.



"Tell me one thing more—are Redgrave and Yates done for good?"

"No. They are unconscious, but not seriously wounded as far as I can see."

"Did you intend to bring them in here?"

"I'm going to carry them in right away."

"Don't do it until after I have told you what I have to say. It is a secret that mustn't reach their ears."

"They won't hear anything in their present condition."

"They may recover their senses at any moment. And what I have to tell is not for them to know. You will say so, too, after you have heard it."

"All right," replied Fred, who decided to humor the wounded man.

He then returned to the deck and, with Bert's assistance, laid Redgrave and Yates out as comfortable as possible in the cockpit. After that they fixed a tow-line from the stern of the launch to the bow of the Katydid. Then he showed Bert how to start the engine, and called Dora on deck.

"I'm going to remain on the catboat in charge of the prisoners," he said to them, "until we reach Creston, where we'll hand them over to the police. You and Dora can keep each other company till you see me again."

Dort wasn't particularly pleased with this arrangement, but she didn't feel as if she ought to make any objection, as she believed Fred was doing things for the best. So Fred returned on board the sailboat, and after Bert had got well under way, and he saw everything was running right, he re-entered the cabin. Jax was lying just as he had left him, but he seemed to be much weaker than before.

"Give me another drink of that whisky," he said, faintly. "I feel as if I haven't many hours' life left in me. That last shot of yours has done the business."

"I hope not," said Fred, earnestly, as he handed him part of a glass of liquor.

"You hope not? Why did you shoot me, then?"

"To save myself. You had me covered point blank with that revolver. If you'd pulled the trigger an instant before I did you'd have had me dead to rights."

"I guess I would," replied Jax with a faint smile. "Well, fortune was against me. You were the lucky one, and there isn't any use of my complaining at this stage of the game. Now, boy, I want you to do me a favor."

"If it's the right kind of a favor I'll do it," replied Fred.

"You won't lose anything by it, I can tell you that. I've got a wife and child, and an old mother in New York City. They don't know that I am a professional crook. I wouldn't have them learn the truth for anything. I didn't leave them very well fixed, but I expected to reap enough on this trip north to place them forever above want. I intended to shake old associations and become a square man once more, but fate has decided otherwise. I'll never live to see them again, and I want you to promise to do the square thing by them if I tell you a secret that'll put a pile of money in your pocket."

"A pile of money in my pocket!" exclaimed Fred, wondering if the man was growing light-headed.

"Yes, a pile of money. All in good, yellow

gold. I've seen it with my own eyes, so I know what I'm talking about. It's a treasure throve that I and two companions discovered in the hills not so many miles from here about a year ago. We quarreled over the division of it, and they attempted to do me out of my share of it. But I fixed them—oh, yes, I fixed them all right. I got them drunk, tied them back to back to a tree, and left them with a bag of gold apiece in front of them, so that when they got sober, and freed themselves, they couldn't say I had cleaned them out completely. Then I removed the rest of the money and buried it in another spot till I could bring a boat up the river and carry it away with me. But I didn't get the chance to do that till lately, and then my plan miscarried on account of Redgrave and Yates, who I had got acquainted with during a six-months' term on the Island. We three were freed on the same day, and they've stuck closer to me than brother ever since. They planned the Brentwood burglaries, and persuaded me to join them, which I did rather against my will at first. But once I got started in my old work again I became as interested as they. My plan was to shake them as soon as we had disposed of the swag, and then carry out my scheme to recover the buried money which would have made me independent for life. No doubt I would have succeeded but for those unlucky rocks in the rapids above here. The stranding of the launch queered us for keeps, and you put the finishing touch to it all."

"Do you mean to say that you tied two men to a tree back to back in the hills surrounding Clear Lake, and——"

"How do you know that it was in the hills surrounding Clear Lake?" asked Jax, interrupting him with feverish intensity.

"How do I know? Why, because a week ago I and my companion, who is now running the launch, were up there surveying a plot of ground, and we came across two dead men in the position you describe, with a bag of gold alongside each of them."

"What!" almost shrieked Jax, glaring at Fred. "You found two dead men—with the gold beside them?"

"I did. One was on one side of the tree, his companion on the other. Their arms were tied at the elbows. It was plain to be seen they had starved to death."

"Is this the solemn truth?" he cried, a bloody froth rising to his lips.

"It is the truth."

"My heavens! I did not mean to kill them. I expected they would be able to work themselves loose next day, and make off with the shares of the money I left to them."

"Evidently you made too good a job of the tying, for they couldn't get loose. Otherwise we shouldn't have found their half-decayed corpses there. Nor the money, either."

Jax was terribly overcome by the knowledge that he had unwittingly committed a double murder.

"No wonder I never got any good of the money, except the very small amount I carried away with me at the time. No wonder this trip has turned out as it has, and I have received my death wound. For me this gold was accursed.



"But you, boy," he cried, with a feverish eagerness, "can go there and get it and turn it to good use. I will tell you where I buried it. All I ask is that you will swear to divide it fairly with the only beings on earth I care for. Will you do this?"

"I will, if you solemnly assure me that it is not stolen money."

"It is not stolen money. It is a treasure trove. It fairly belongs to me, as I found it."

"If it belongs honestly to you then it all ought to go to your relatives."

"I do not ask that. There is more there than they will ever need. I give you one-half of it—I will it to you by word of mouth—in consideration of your promise to go and get it and send my people the other half. Do you accept the trust?"

"I do, and if what you have told me is the truth I will faithfully execute your wishes in the matter."

"That is all I wish to know," said the dying man. "Light a candle or something, for it is growing dark. I want you to write down the directions I shall give you."

Fred got the lantern which hung in a corner, and brought it to the locker where Jax lay.

"Give me another drink, for my strength is going fast," he said.

Fred handed it to him, and then took out his note-book and a pencil.

"Write down 'Mrs. Frances Jax, — E. Twenty-first street, New York.'"

Fred did so.

"When you send the money give them no hint of my true character, but say I died of heart disease, or something of that sort, that I am buried out here, and that the money belonged to me. Will you do that?"

"I will."

"Now put your hand in my inner vest pocket. You will find a paper. Take it out."

Fred followed directions and brought forth the paper. Fred read it carefully over and said it was sufficiently plain.

"Put it in your pocket and be careful of it. Recover the money as soon as you can, and carry out my wishes. Do you promise me that on your word of honor?"

"I do," replied Fred, earnestly, as he took Jax's hand in his.

Just then Fred noticed that the sailboat had come to a rest, and he heard Bert calling to him.

"I must leave you now, Mr. Jax," he said, in a sympathetic voice. "Perhaps you will recover after all. A doctor will be able to say when he examines you. At any rate I hope you will, for I would prefer not to have your death on my hands."

He gave the man another drink to revive him, and then left the cabin, to find the boats close to one of the Creston wharves. Pulling on the tow-line, he worked the Katydid up to the launch and boarded her. Fred said:

"Bert, run up to the police station, and tell the officer in charge that we have the Brentwood burglars on board, ready to turn over to the authorities. Say they are all wounded, one perhaps fatally, and that they must send a wagon and a surgeon."

Bert started off on his errand, leaving Fred and Dora together.

"I hope you won't blame me too severely for getting you into trouble, Dora," said the boy. "When I invited you to take the sail I could not foresee the unfortunate ending of the excursion."

"Blame you, Fred!" she said, taking his hand in hers. "No. Why should I? You were not responsible for what has happened. Besides, did you not afterward risk your life to get me away from those men? Neither mother nor father will blame you, either."

In three-quarters of an hour Bert returned with a wagon containing three policemen and a physician. The doctor shook his head over Jax, and he was removed to the town hospital, while the other two were patched up and carried to the city lock-up.

Next day Fred Stuart found himself a hero, as the news of his capture of the burglars and the recovery of their plunder spread all over town like wildfire. Jax died in the Creston hospital that afternoon, the other two rascals, recovered from their wounds, were tried in due course, convicted, and sent to the State prison for a term of years. The reward of \$3,000 was divided between Fred and Bert, though the former got all the glory of the affair, which, as a matter of fact, he deserved.

A few days after the trial and conviction of the robbers Fred told Bert about the buried money, and asked him to help in its recovery and removal. They got a few days' vacation for the purpose, took the launch up to Swan Creek, went over to the lake, and digging at the spot described in the paper, found gold coin in bags to the value of \$75,000. Fred kept perfect faith with the dead Jax, and sent his family in New York City exactly half of the amount recovered.

With a part of his share he immediately purchased the property at the lake which had attracted him as a splendid hotel site. Soon afterward he made a deal with a well-known hotel man, and sold the property at a big advance on his original investment.

Fred, during the following spring, surveyed the new extension of the trolley line to Taylorville, and thenceforward took that branch of Mr. Fisher's business entirely on his hands. Subsequently he became Mr. Fisher's partner in the entire business, and not long afterward the accepted suitor for Dora Darling's hand. On his twenty-second birthday they were married, and no happier couple than they reside in Brentwood, where he is still alluded to as the Young Surveyor of Happy Valley.

Next week's issue will contain "BOSS OF THE MARKET; or, THE GREATEST BOY IN WALL STREET."

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Mrs. Marsh took a bite of the cake and laid it down hastily. "Norah," she said, "did you follow the recipe, or do as you usually do, and guess?" "Sure, mum, I followed the recipe, only I put in six eggs instead of four, because two was bad, and I wanted to even 'em up."



## CURRENT NEWS

### SMALLEST ELECTRIC MOTOR

Ivan T. Nedland of Hillsboro, N. D., is the inventor and maker of what is said to be the smallest electric motor in the world. It is less than a quarter of an inch in length, but perfect in all details and operates faultlessly. About six years ago Mr. Nedland made and exhibited the smallest steam engine in the world that operated perfectly.

### WOMEN CHEWING TOBACCO

Officials in Schoolcraft County were given a shock in Circuit Court at Manistique, Mich., recently when they observed some women witnesses in a criminal case calmly chewing tobacco.

The women came from Kentucky with their husbands and settled in the woods. It is said tobacco chewing among the women is quite common in the "Kentuckian settlements" in Schoolcraft County.

While the trial was in progress a group of women were quartered in a hotel. There was no

cuspidor in their room. They desired a little social chat and a chew, so they spread newspapers on the floor and expectorated on the papers.

### QUANTITY OF GOLD IN THE SEA IS REDUCED BY SUN SPOTS

The quantity of gold in the sea has been reduced recently owing to the action of sun spots, according to the annual bullion letter of an English firm.

"It is reported," the firm says, "that the quantity has been recently reduced from one grain to under one-thousandth part of a grain per ton of sea water.

"We have been informed," they add, "that experts in England and in America have shown that one metal can be changed into another at certain periods of radioactivity, such as when there are sun spots. At such a time there is immense radio-action upon the earth and this is said to be the only possible explanation of the disappearance of so large a proportion of the gold in sea water."

## BOYS, DON'T MISS THIS! MYSTERY MAGAZINE, No. 153 WILL BE A CRACKERJACK!

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# Wrecked On The Desert

— OR —

## THE ADVENTURES OF TWO BOY PROSPECTORS

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

### CHAPTER XXIV

#### Conclusion.

Before Edna could reach his side, the ugly faces of the two mad Meztizos were thrust around the corner of the rocks.

"Come no nearer!" shouted Arthur. "If you do I fire!"

The answer was a sneering laugh, and both stepped into full view and started forward on the run.

"Fire as much as you like. You can't kill us. We are bullet-proof!" Tony yelled, while Ramon laughed louder than ever.

Now, Arthur was a wretched shot, and he knew it.

"I'll wait until they are close up," he thought. "It's my best chance."

"Shoot! Shoot!" screamed Edna. "They have just killed Manuel, Tony says. Oh, if I had not sent him outside!"

"Get behind me, quick!" gasped Arthur. "I shall have to shoot them both."

But the boy's hand trembled from sheer nervousness, and his brain was in a whirl.

As the two madmen closed in on him, he fired at Tony and missed. At the same instant his injured leg gave way beneath him, and he fell flat on his face, the revolver flying from his hand as he went down.

With a catlike spring, Tony closed upon the weapon, and got it.

"We win! Now I'll kill you all!" he yelled, while Ramon, laughing fiendishly, made a rush forward.

"Oh, boss, can you ever forgive me?" spoke a voice from the darkness, as Doctor Furman rose to his feet.

"Manuel!" gasped the doctor, striking another match.

The Mestizo was in the act of getting up. His face was almost black; there were livid spots about his throat.

"Speak! How did it happen?" the doctor cried.

"It's all my fault," groaned Manuel. "Miss Edna would have me go out to see if you were coming. I never ought to have listened to her. Ramon and Tony were here, and they jumped on me. See, they almost choked me to death. I lost my senses. I thought I was gone. I've just come to since you and the young senor came into the cave."

"Ha! How long ago was this?"

"Senor, I don't know. But why do we wait here? We must go down instantly and try to save Miss Edna."

"Easier said than done, since the ladder is gone, my friend," replied the doctor, with a calmness which surprised Jack.

"But there is still a chance to head those rascals off," he added. "Come, Jack! You, too, if you are able to do some rough traveling, Manuel. It may amount to little more than saving the gold and the boats, but it is the only way."

He hurried out of the cave and down upon the desert.

"Where are we going, sir?" demanded Jack.

"There is still another way of reaching the underground river," was the reply.

They had abandoned everything but the rifle, so they were not impeded in any way.

Hurrying along the base of the range for nearly a mile, they came upon the mouth of a narrow canyon, which cut direct across the range, and began a steep descent.

It was indeed a rough road, and great caution had to be observed, until, at last, having reached a much lower level, they struck the floor of the canyon, which was perfectly level.

"Now we must run for it!" cried the doctor. "There is not an instant to lose. Either this, or we shall have to build another ladder before we even learn the truth."

On they flew with all speed, and soon came upon the underground river, which here crossed the canyon, emerging from a high tunnel and vanishing into another of equal height.

The stream was much narrower than in the cave. Indeed, the doctor leaped across, saying that he would take that side.

And with raised rifle he stood waiting for the boats to appear.

Never, it seemed to Jack, had he passed such anxious moments. Not a word was spoken. They stood with their eyes glued upon the darkness of the tunnel, listening to the rushing water, until, at last, sure enough, the two boats appeared, one hitched behind the other.

The gold bags were there, the provision baskets were there, but no sign of Ramon or Tony. It was an easy matter to seize hold of the foremost boat and stop its progress, and this was done.

"Now what can this mean?" cried the doctor. "Here are the oars in place. Did the boats accidentally go adrift?"

Quickly all three got aboard, and the boats were turned.

"I'll row," said Jack. "It will leave you free to handle the rifle."

Although he was pulling against the stream, Jack made shot work of it, and it was not long before they hit the sink.

Eagerly Jack peered over his shoulder, wondering if Arthur and the girl he now knew he loved were still alive.

It had not been so bad back there in the sink as Arthur had at first feared, for his expectation was to be shot offhand, and probably he would have been but for Ramon, who suddenly stopped his mad laugh, and exclaimed:

(To be continued.)



## GOOD READING

### TYPEWRITING TO MUSIC

To insure more rhythm in the work, the typewriting department of the Dalton High School has inaugurated a system of typewriting to music furnished by a phonograph. So far the students find that typewriting to the tune of the "Parade of Wooden Soldiers" is helpful in effective concentration on their lessons.

### THIEF IN TRICK BOX

Clever thieves varied an old trick and succeeded in robbing a jewelry store in a crowded Berlin street of about \$20,000 worth of loot recently.

Just at the noon hour, when the proprietor and his clerks locked up and left for luncheon, a dray drew up and two men unloaded a large box which they placed against the shop door. They informed inquiries that they were waiting for the proprietor's return to collect cartage. In about half an hour, saying they could wait no longer, they reloaded the box and drove away.

When the proprietor returned he discovered the loss of practically all the jewelry in the store.

### SNAKE IN THE DRAINPIPE

Edward Hindershoot of Mauch Chunk, Pa., having occasion to visit his cellar the other evening, was surprised to find the floor buried under six inches of water. Never before had his drainpipe refused its office. He called Mrs. Hindershoot to bring his flashlight and soon discovered the drain was clogged. From it protruded a foot of what Mr. Hindershoot took to be a piece of black rope. It floated apparently, on top of the water and seemed to gently sway from side to side.

Mrs. Hindershoot held the flashlight while her husband sought to remove the obstructing "rope." He grabbed it and pulled and pulled without result, save a few vagrant cuss words. Finally he braced a foot against the wall, gave a mighty heave and out came the "rope" and Mr. Hindershoot sat down with a mighty splash.

Instantly his right arm was encircled by the "rope" and slimy coils fastened themselves about the man's neck. The rays of the lamp disclosed the terror-stricken victim, the swaying head of an enraged blacksnake. Fortunately Mr. Hindershoot's son arrived at this moment and, after a time, succeeded in killing the reptile. It proved to be the largest of its species ever killed in this part of the State and measured 7 feet, 2 inches in length.

Mr. Hindershoot says the capture of the snake solves the mystery surrounding the disappearance of food from his cellar. He thinks the snake must have "overloaded his stomach," and finding the drainpipe too small for its usual getaway was calmly awaiting the process of digestion when attacked from the rear.

### BOY, 17, GETS \$15,000, NEEDS \$5,000 MORE

The necessary expenditures for a 17-year-old boy who will inherit a fund now amounting to \$2,800,000, which is increasing at the rate of \$50,000 a year, were set forth in a petition submitted to Supreme Court Justice Guy. The court granted an increase of \$5,000 a year in the \$15,000 allowance paid to John Arthur Hinckley of 40 East Sixty-second street.

The boy is the son of J. Arthur Hinckley, who died in 1910, leaving two-thirds of his estate in trust to his son, the other third to go to the boy on the death of his mother, Mrs. Mary Beach Hinckley. The boy is to have half the principal when he reaches 35 and the other half at 40.

Mrs. Hinckley applied to the court as general guardian for the increase of \$5,000 on the ground that since the \$15,000 allowance was made living expenses have increased, and during the last several years she has had to pay part of the cost of the boy's maintenance out of her personal funds. She estimates that she has paid \$21,000 annually for her son in the last few years, and makes an estimate of the various items, which included the following:

Tuition, \$1,000; clothing, \$2,500; tailoring, \$800; half the rent, \$1,000; half the maid service, \$900; auto, \$3,500; chauffeur, \$2,000; half the household maintenance, \$2,500; pocket money, \$500; board of dogs, \$400; amusements, \$500, and gifts to charity, \$500.

Mrs. Hinckley explained that the income is now \$50,000 a year more than the allowance to her son from his two-thirds of his father's estate.

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# INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

## WHAT IS RERADIATION?

*Radio World* contributes this definition of what is becoming known as the greatest nuisance in radio:

"Reradiation, or, more correctly, 'interfering radiation,' is caused by the generation of radio-frequency waves due to the persistent oscillation of one or more tubes of a receiving set, which causes interference in other nearby sets by creating a beat note—that is, by making audible the difference between the waves radiated by two receivers or by a receiver and a transmitting station's carrier wave."

## AMATEUR'S WORK

To the amateur operators is due much of the credit for the position the United States occupies in radio work. The rapidity of the practical development of long distance radio communication has been largely the result of tests and experiments conducted by amateurs in determining the efficiency or inefficiency of equipment.

Fully 90 per cent. of the radio operators in the American military or naval services during the war were recruited from the ranks of amateur operators.

The amateurs have also been of valuable assistance to the Department of Commerce with its limited inspection force in helping to administer the radio laws.

## AVOID SHIELDING WHEN POSSIBLE

There are usually better ways of avoiding "hand capacity effects" than by covering the back of the panel with tinfoil or copper. If shields seem to be absolutely necessary small ones should be used, shielding only those parts where capacity effects are annoying. Shielding always reduces the efficiency of the set. Spaghetti covering for wires is not nearly so necessary as many amateur builders believe, although it is mighty handy for the builder who knows that he can't build a workmanlike-appearing set. Spaghetti is only useful in preventing short-circuits between wires that are apt to touch. A good job of wiring requires little spaghetti.

## YOU CAN'T TUNE THEM OUT

There seems to be an impression that some types of receivers will tune out squeals caused by nearby regenerative sets improperly handled. This is not correct. If you are tuned to WEAf and your neighbor, tuning, squeals into WEAf, you cannot, no matter what apparatus you have, tune out his squeal without at the same time tuning out WEAf. Some sets are so arranged that they cannot squeal. This refers, however, only to squeals originating in the set and not to squeals that come in on the antenna. Of course,

a set using a loop (because of the directional qualities of the loop) would not be subject to so much annoyance as a set using an antenna.

## EASE OF CONTROL

Ease of control is very essential, especially to the radio amateur in his traffic work. One cannot tune a receiver all evening merely to hear the bedtime stories from Radioville, two miles away. Don't have seventeen tuning controls on your receiver; three is plenty. A receiver may be—though they usually are not—selective with but one tuning control. Don't, however, sacrifice efficiency for ease of control.

As to the cost: buy inexpensive parts if necessary; not cheap parts; there's a difference. The cost of many receivers could be kept down by taking off the trimmings. A receiver don't need voltmeters or bezels mounted on its panel.

Be sure to purchase a good variable condenser. The one with the least parts is all right. One cannot, upon merely examining a condenser, tell its electrical efficiency. A variable condenser should be mechanically good. Hard rubber is much better for insulation on a condenser than porous, absorbent fiber. Get good mica insulated fixed condensers if you value the quality of the signals you desire from your set. See that the fixed condensers are well made and firmly pressed tight. A fixed condenser, the capacity of which varies, is worse than nothing.

## NEW FRENCH RULES

French authorities have issued regulations intended to encourage broadcasting and the use of radio equipment by amateurs throughout the country, according to advices received at the Department of Commerce from the American Commercial Attache at Paris. It is provided that receiving sets may be possessed by any citizen of France who will sign a formal declaration, receivable at any post-office, stating the kind of equipment used and agreeing that no part shall be taken in the transmission of private correspondence. Sets in the possession of foreigners, or used to receive private correspondence, require individual authorization.

The right to operate transmitting sets will be regulated by the Under Secretary of the French Postal Services, on the recommendation of a permanent commission upon which public service groups, manufacturers and amateurs will have representation. Transmitting sets are to be classified as those intended for establishing private communication; public broadcasting sets; portable sets; sets used for technical experiments and amateurs' sets.

Wave length standards and other technical regulations will be set up for each class by public authority. The use of amateur and experimental sets will not involve the payment of any fees. Public broadcasting is made the subject of individual contact.



### WIND CANNOT AFFECT NEW AERIAL

Another improvement has been introduced in station WBZ, following the attempt of the Westinghouse engineers to make the Springfield station as perfect as possible. This particular improvement was made to the antenna and was introduced in order to reduce the possibility of WBZ's signals of swinging out.

Fading or "swinging" is a very peculiar phenomenon, the exact cause of which has not as yet been accurately determined. It is known, however, that the swinging of aërials—both of the station transmitting and also of the receiving set—can cause fading. Fading is characterized by a complete disappearance of signals which had been received very loud a few seconds before. Even before the operator has the opportunity to readjust his receiver, the signals are heard at the same intensity as previously. Most interference is experienced when receiving long distance stations.

Although the antenna system of WBZ is one of the finest of any broadcasting stations, further improvements were added when a change was made in the method of connecting it with the transmitter. In this instance, the transmitter is used as a generator of oscillations which are modulated by voice currents. The aerial acts merely as a radiator of these oscillations. The oscillator is so connected to the radiating system, which is made up of the aerial and the counterpoise system, that the swinging by the wind or other agencies of either one will not disturb it in any way. Thus it will keep up its frequency, and no change will be transmitted from it to the aerial. A steady signal results, free from swinging and fading.

### RADIO DESIGN

Many radio fans are constructing their own receivers, some of which work well, and some which are tolerated merely because the builder has not the necessary funds to make a new one. For the construction of a receiver which is to work entirely satisfactorily, a thorough knowledge of radio principles is essential, but one may get on well with a few pointers and his own common sense.

The essentials of a good receiver are: (1) sensitivity, (2) selectivity, (3) ease of control and (4) moderate cost. To combine all of these features is not as simple a matter as it may seem.

First of all, a receiver must be sensitive. This means the use of vacuum tubes, and radio frequency amplification or regeneration. For a single tube set, regeneration is quite a desirable, almost necessary application. There are numerous regenerative circuits to choose from, but for short wave reception a circuit in which regeneration takes place by use of a tickler is most satisfactory. Regeneration as secured by means of the absorption method, offers some advantages.

For selectivity, a two circuit tuner seems to be the only one worthy of consideration. Tests made last winter showed a single circuit tuner to bring in the stations a trifle louder, but the tuning was so broad that local and loud broadcasts could not be eliminated. Even a few amateurs who work on 200 meters were heard on this tuner, when tuned for the broadcasts. It

is of no use to get loud signals, if you cannot pick out the desired stations to the exclusion of the rest. The main objection a radio fan has to a two circuit tuner is the additional control.

Tuners may be made in such a way as to afford the simplicity of the single circuit tuner with the selectivity of the loose coupler tuner, by making the primary of the circuit a periodic. That is to say that the primary is not tuned at all. The untuned primary consists of from one to five turns of wire wound over the secondary coil, or coupled to it. These turns may be tapped or not. The Reinartz tuner uses a tapped but untuned primary. This is a very satisfactory method of coupling the primary and secondary circuits.

### LIQUID AIR AND RADIO

Liquid air is one of the coldest things known, yet it plays an important part in radio. In the manufacture of vacuum tubes the Western Electric Company uses 150 quarts of liquid air daily, which makes necessary the largest liquefying plant in New York.

The more air pumped out of a vacuum tube the better it will function. Mercury vapor is used as the agent to pump out the air. A part of the system consists of a mercury trap inserted between the mercury pump and the tubes to be exhausted. The trap is surrounded by liquid air, which condenses the mercury vapor, freezing it to the walls of the trap as moisture is frozen on window panes.

Liquid air never gets warmer than 312 degrees Fahrenheit below zero. If a beaker full of liquid air is put on a cake of ice, the liquid air will boil briskly, because the ice, at about 32 degrees, is quite hot compared with the liquid air at 312 degrees below zero. It is said that if wool were saturated with liquid air and confined it would be more explosive than dynamite.

In the Western Electric liquid air plant the air is first compressed at 2,000 pounds pressure per square inch by four-stage air compressors. Pressure of the successive stages is 50, 175, 910 and 3,000 pounds per square inch. As the temperature of the air is increased considerably in compression, it is then passed through two cooling tanks in which the air passes through small water-cooled copper coils. The air must be purified before it passes through the liquefier, as impurities would congeal in that process at much higher temperature than the liquid air, thereby stopping up the passages. The air is accordingly passed through a series of purifying bottles. The first contains a filter which removes any oil or other foreign matter which may be suspended in the air. It then flows through two bottles containing caustic soda, which eliminates carbon dioxide. The next bottle contains water-free granular calcium chloride, and this removes moisture from the air. After the proper stage of purification is reached it passes into the liquefier, which is contained in a tank packed with sheep's wool as an insulator to keep out the heat of the room. The air then passes through a number of coils of copper tubing, and finally it is let out into the tank, where it is directed against the coils through which it has just passed. This reduces the temperature of the incoming air until it gets down to liquefying temperature.



## FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

## ELEPHANTS INCREASING

The elephant is a very useful animal both for draft purposes and for ivory. A few years ago 70,000 were slaughtered annually for their tusks so that it seemed as though there was a good chance of the big animals becoming extinct. Wise laws, however, have checked the destruction so that the number is increasing. The war gave the elephants their chance and the British authorities in East Africa have also protected them. South of Zambesi the elephant is virtually extinct and the Cape market for ivory has ceased to exist. At present Mozambique is the center of the ivory trade. Oddly enough the Portuguese, through whose hands it comes, send nearly all the ivory across to Bombay, where it is sorted and cut and dispatched to the European markets. The world's supply of real elephant ivory is now about 250 tons a year.

## ARGENTINE GIRL TO ESSAY CHANNEL SWIM

Lillian G. Harrison, the twenty-year-old Anglo-Argentine girl who swam across the River Plate Dec. 22, the first person to accomplish the feat, hopes to set another record by being the first of her sex to swim the English Channel. She is planning, with the backing of the Argentine Athletic Federation, to leave for England in May and attempt the crossing during the English summer.

Enrique Tiraboschi, who swam the Channel last summer and who accompanied Miss Harrison a part of the distance across the Plate, believes she will succeed in her new venture. The distance she had to swim across the big South American river was 26½ miles in a direct line, somewhat less than the Channel swim, and, according to Tiraboschi, the Channel currents are no more difficult to master than the Plate currents, though somewhat colder. Tiraboschi himself failed in an attempt to swim the Plate two years ago.

Miss Harrison won cash prizes of 7,000 pesos, two cups and a gold medal for her feat. She accomplished the distance in 24 hours 19½ minutes.

## CUTTING GLASS WITH A MACHINE

Large mills sheets of glass have always been cut up into smaller sizes by hand, with much expenditure of time and with unsatisfactory results. It has been necessary to score the glass with the cutter on one side, and then break it; under this treatment there is always the risk that the under, unscored edge will crumble, or even that the whole sheet will crack. The gauging has presented difficulties, too, an allowance over the gauge reading of from an eighth to a quarter inch having been necessary.

A Newark manufacturer now offers a machine for cutting glass, based upon the new principle of scoring it on both sides. This calls for two cutting arms, two cutters, and a spring-held adjusting nut for insuring even pressure against both sides of the sheet, as well as for separating the cutters for insertion and removal of the work. Breakage is eliminated, as the sheet thus scored at identical lines on both sides comes apart at once and cleanly; while the gauge works to its true readings, without allowances. Finally, it is claimed that owing to the better regulated and even pressure on them, the cutter wheels used on the machine have from five to ten times the life of those used by hand.

## LAUGHS

"Say, Esther, do you know how they summon the deaf mutes to dinner at the asylum?" "No, how?" "They ring dumb-bells, of course."

"I'd like to go to the mountains this summer, but my doctor has ordered me to the seashore." "That's funny. My doctor has ordered me to go to the mountains and I'm crazy for the sea." "Let's trade doctors."

"How's this, son? Yesterday you cleaned up the back yard nicely, but to-day it looks worse than ever." "That's not my fault, dad. I fired everything over the fence, but last night the kid next door slammed 'em back."

The new boarder seemed rather displeased; he sniffed at the contents of his coffee cup and set it down. "Well," asked the landlady in a peevish tone, "have you anything to say against the coffee?" "Not a word," he answered. "I never speak ill of the absent."

"Aren't there some jealousies in your progressive euchre club?" "No indeed," answered young Mrs. Torkins; "when we buy prizes we are always careful to select things that no one really wants, so that the winner will not be an object of envy."

The orator had made a speech, and as he left the platform he was congratulated by a friend. "A magnificent speech," said the friend, "but hardly original, for I have a book at home that contains every word of it." The surprised orator said that he would like to see the book, and the next morning he received an unabridged dictionary.



## BRIEF BUT POINTED

DANISH BANKS LIMIT CLERKS  
MARRIAGES

Danish banks have forbidden male employees receiving less than 4,000 crowns (about \$725) a year to marry. In many of the banks most of the clerks have to work several years before attaining the minimum marriage salary.

LAND DEED, MISLAID 102 YEARS AGO,  
FILED

A quit claim deed dated 1822, drawn for land in Andover, Mass., has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds Office of Essex County after a delay of 102 years, because the certificate was missing among a number of other papers.

This deed transferred land near the North Andover-Bradford town line formerly owned by Samuel and Benjamin Day of Salem to the purchasers, William and Richard Haseltine of Bradford. The land is now the property of Mrs. Henry Eday of Wardhill, a granddaughter of Richard Haseltine, who on finding the deed had it filed immediately. The document was well preserved.

NO CHANGE IN BASEBALLS IN MAJOR  
LEAGUES

There will be no change in the kind of baseballs used in the major leagues this season.

President Johnson of the American League, in making this announcement, said the reason for the erratic behavior of the balls early last season, which resulted in an epidemic of home runs, was that their newness made them unusually lively. When the umpires were instructed to keep the spheres in play until they actually showed wear and tear, he said, the game slowed down.

"We will make no change in the ball this year," President Johnson said. "There is no need of experiments along this line. It was the new balls constantly in play which caused the havoc early last season. After the batters hit the ball a few times they will slow it up just enough to make it normal."

"Although I think the fans want to see the ball go over the fence at times, the men who are adept at making home runs will have to earn them."

WOMAN AS SECURITY FOR DIAMOND  
RING

When the owner of one of the leading jewelry stores in the Austrian city of Salzburg, recently saw a well-dressed young couple walk into his store he had visions of a profitable deal. Consequently, when the young man, who introduced himself as "Engineer Koerner," asked to see some rings, Herr Sikan spread out the finest he had.

After considerable conversation, "Engineer Koerner" picked out two solitaires, valued at 35,000,000 crowns, which figures out about \$500 in real money, explaining that he was merely acting as agent for a wealthy friend, too busy to spend time in such matters, to whom he must show the rings before closing the transaction. Handing the jeweler a bundle of checks as an advance payment and courteously requesting his companion

to await his return, "Engineer Koerner" left the store.

Hours passed, still the young woman sat waiting for her cavalier. Herr Sikan finally grew suspicious and called up the banks and the police. Then it turned out, says the story in the *Berner Tagwacht*, that the young woman knew little more about her companion than did the jeweler, having only made his acquaintance a few days before in a Vienna coffee house. The police knew a whole lot about "Engineer Koerner," however, quickly identifying him as Friedrich Schiller, 23-year-old barber and cafe pianist, with a long record of similar jobs. When arrested "Engineer Koerner" had one of the rings in his possession, as well as 6,000,000 crowns of money for which he had pawned the other.

## LIFE IN THE OCEAN DEPTHS

Monotony is a strikingly characteristic of the eerie deeps, which well-nigh all types of marine animals, from microscopic forms to fishes, have made their abode. There are no seasons—uniform winter, endless night. Yet with a perfectly uncanny adaptability, protoplasm flows as serenely in temperatures sometimes below the freezing point of fresh water as in limpid pools of tropic reefs. There are no bacteria and no living green plants. A ceaseless drizzle of small organisms that have succumbed in the ocean meadows (perhaps miles above) slowly settles like gentle snow on the ocean floor and provides food for multitudes, which in turn fall prey to others, in thousands of cycles.

Deep-sea animals are much more delicately constructed than their shallower-water relatives, many having bodies thoroughly permeable to water. Sedentary forms, such as frail, phosphorescent sea pens, arborescent polyps and tall sea lilies or crinoids, rear themselves above the mud, while quaint spiny crabs, with spindly legs and egg-shell bodies, vie in slimness with the pycnogonids, grotesque "all-legs" neither spiders nor crustaceans. In the branches of these miniature forests of tree-animals dwell thousands of different species of all sorts of types. On and within the ooze are other myriads—bristling sea urchins, sea stars and sea cucumbers, inconceivably delicate shrimps, molluscs and worms.

When we ascend a great mountain the vegetation and animals change with increasing altitudes. Broad belts of approximately equal temperature have a uniform assemblage of plants and animals. So it is when with the long arm of the dredge we follow the bottom into deep waters. The lighted zone along shore teems with life unlike that at one hundred fathoms, while at five thousand fathoms still another world is seen, and so on with increasing depth. That temperature is the most important factor seems likely, for at five thousand to one thousand fathoms, for example, off California, are found relatively shallow-water subarctic types—*Abstract from article by W. K. Fisher in The Scientific Monthly for October, 1923.*



## ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

### FOXES ARE CANNIBALS

George East has just learned that blue foxes, unless fed, will eat each other. He stocked a small island northwest of Metlakatia, Alaska, with several dozen pairs of foxes last year, spending many thousand grains of gold dust in the deal. Establishing the little animals of the rocky island, he left for the mainland on business. Bad weather prevented landing on his island for two weeks.

Upon returning seventeen adult foxes had sacrificed themselves to their cannibal brothers and sisters, while they were making mincemeat of the eighteenth. Foxes, while able to obtain much food along the beaches, must be fed regularly at least once in two days. East's loss in cash value is \$4,000, but he fears the next generation of pups will have inherited the unnatural appetite.

### FAKE WINDOW CLEANER TAKES \$20,000 IN GEMS

The theft by a supposed window cleaner of \$20,000 worth of jewelry recently from the home of Reginald C. Sinche, stock broker, at 21 East Eighty-first street, was made known at police headquarters.

All that could be learned was that two antique earrings of large value were among the loot.

It was disclosed that the other day a man who posed as a window cleaner and who carried the paraphernalia for that work was admitted to the house by the butler.

The "window cleaner" was escorted to the second floor, where he remained an hour. About an hour after his departure, the butler discovered that some of the rooms had been ransacked and \$20,000 worth of jewelry taken.

### MOON'S HALO IS OPTICAL ILLUSION

A time-honored sign used by many so-called weather prophets in their avocation of telling us what the weather will be is the halo around the moon. Legend has it that, when a halo is to be seen, rain is not far distant. Science tells us that the halo is an optical illusion, but places some credence in the prophet's version of it.

Under certain conditions of weather, very often preceding heavy rain, the upper atmosphere surrounding the earth contains a peculiar sort of cloud, full of tiny drops of water vapor, or even of minute particles of ice. Each of these drops or tiny icicles acts on light as a prism; that is, it "bends" the light much as the beveled edge of a mirror does. Between the moon and the earth, then, are vast numbers of tiny drops of vapor which refract light. If this belt of prisms is so thick as to catch every ray of the moon's light, we see, of course, neither halo nor moon, but only a very dense night.

It often happens, however, that most of the rays pass between the prisms, so that we can see the moon. Only a portion of the rays are deflected. All of the deflected rays reach the earth at some point, but only those that are deflected at such an angle that we can see them are visible

to us. Others reach the earth hundreds of miles from us. Let us assume that we see the rays which are bent by a prism a distance of, say, a quarter of a mile to the right of the moon. It follows that we shall also see the bent ray from the prism the same distance to the left of the moon. If we imagine the moon as the center of a circle, every prism a quarter of a mile from that center, on the same plane, will bend light toward us and we shall see a halo, which is only an optical illusion but which gives some credence to the weather man's prophesies, because the weather conditions under which the atmosphere makes this possible usually precede a rain.

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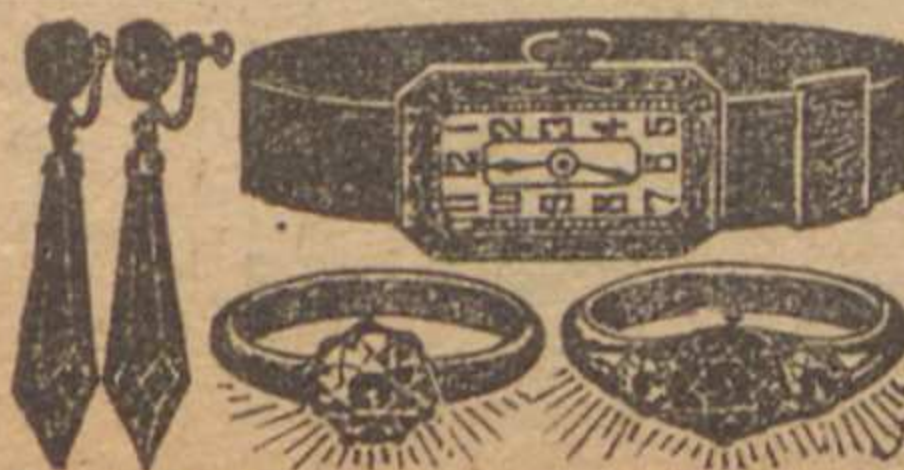
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## STARVING TEN DAYS IN HOLLOW OAK TREE

Imprisoned for ten days in the hollow of a giant Texas oak tree into which he had fallen, Harry Comstock, thirty-one, was rescued recently by Baxter County deputy sheriffs and farmers who cut into the tree with an axe.

Comstock drank a gallon of water within a few minutes. He had been without food or drink during his imprisonment.

Comstock told those who rescued him that he climbed into the tree to seek shelter and that he fell into the deep hollow of the tree. He tried to get out but failed. At intervals for ten days he shouted for help. Gradually he grew weaker.

Then some one walking through the Otto Reiley ranch heard a cry for help. Finally it was traced to the oak tree and aid was summoned.

It took half an hour to hew into the trunk where the man was imprisoned. He was so weak that he could hardly speak and his voice was husky for want of water. His body was bruised all over from struggling to escape.

Comstock and his mother lived in Kalamazoo, Mich. He was brought to the Baxter County Sheriff's office, where a physician was called.



# GAS WELL NOW ALMOST MILE DEEP

The deepest well in the world has been drilled in Youngsville, Warren County, Pa.

When work ceased recently on account of an injury to the driller, Harry Topper, the hole was almost a mile in depth — 5,035 feet, to be exact. Topper injured his hand, and as soon as he is able to use it drilling will be resumed.

The well is the property of the Starr Oil and Gas Company, composed of I. L. Anderson, the original promoter; his brother, Alvin, and Hugh Keller. Anderson started the well on May 30, 1921, hoping to strike gas in the Glade sand, but when that sand was encountered it was found to be the poorest in the locality, and Anderson induced the others to enter the venture and drill deeper, says the Philadelphia North American.

At 335 feet a small volume of gas was found, which encouraged farther effort. The drill hit a hard formation at 4,545 feet that is called the Clinton or Medina sand. After drilling through 200 feet of this a slaty formation was pierced, and below that a loose red sand was found that is called the Red Medina. The company intends to drill 100 feet into this formation before leaving it.

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